



**MIDDLEBURY
PERFORMING ARTS
SERIES**

P R E S E N T S

ROOMFUL OF TEETH & ALLISON LOGGINS-HULL

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2025

7:30 PM

MAHANEY ARTS CENTER, ROBISON HALL



Roomful of Teeth
Allison Loggins-Hull, Flute/Electronics

Vesper Sparrow (2012)

Missy Mazzoli
b. 1980

The Isle (2016)

Caroline Shaw
b. 1982

- I. Prologue
- II. Ariel
- III. Caliban
- IV. Prospero
- V. Epilogue

FRICTION (2025)

Allison Loggins-Hull
b. 1982

- I. Neuro
- II. The Thread
- III. DEI
- IV. Sorry
- V. Token
- VI. Dan
- VII. Honesty

Vermont premiere.

Co-commissioned by Music Accord and the Middlebury Performing Arts Series.



This evening's program will run 75 minutes with no intermission.

*This performance is sponsored by the Performing Arts Series, Music Accord,
and the Rothrock Family Residency Fund.*

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Photography and the use of audio or video equipment are prohibited.*



Program Notes and Librettos

MAZZOLI *Vesper Sparrow*

Vesper Sparrow was written for Roomful of Teeth at their 2012 residency at Mass MoCA. The text comes from Farnoosh Fathi's poem "Home State," from her recent book *Great Guns*. The piece is an eclectic amalgamation of imaginary birdsong and my own interpretation of Sardinian overtone singing. In this piece, I tried to capture the exuberance and energy of these individual singers as well as a bit of the magic that is created when this group comes together.

—Missy Mazzoli

Libretto

What will come so soon
To my golden door
When asleep from all sides
Asleep in the glass pajamas of man

SHAW *The Isle*

The Isle begins with a cloud of murmuring voices — a musical imagining of something hinted at in Shakespeare's stage directions in *The Tempest*. The calls for "a burden, dispersedly" and "solemn music" suggest an off-stage refrain and/or perhaps something even more otherworldly. In *Shakespearean Metaphysics*, Michael Witmore writes: "Like the island itself, which seems to be the ultimate environment in which the play's action takes place, music is a medium that flows from, within, and around that *imaginary* place into the ambient space of performance proper. If some of the courtiers from Naples and Milan are lulled to sleep by the island's 'solemn music', the audience can hear this music in a way that it cannot feel the hardness of the boards that the sleeping players lie on." In taking cues from this reading of the play, I've constructed my own musical reading of the island of *The Tempest*. Three monologues, by Ariel, Caliban, and Prospero, are set in three distinct ways. Ariel's initial song of welcome appears, for the most part, homophonically, although its break from the quasi-robotic delivery (into the "burden, dispersedly") points to the character's vaporous and ethereal nature. Caliban's famous description of the island as "full of noises" finds its home in a distraught and lonely monodic song, ornamented and driven by extraneous sounds. Prospero's evocation of the various features and inhabitants of the island (from the final act) breaks apart into spoken voices that eventually dissolve into the wordless voices of the beginning, mirroring his pledge to throw his book of spells into the sea (and possibly to return to the island's pre-lingual state). The harmonic material of the beginning and the end of the piece (the murmuring voices) is a 24-chord progression that includes all major and minor triads of the Western 12-note system (for fun). As Prospero says: "But this rough magic I here abjure, and when I have required some heavenly music, which even now I do, to work mine end upon their senses that this airy charm is for, I'll break my staff, bury it certain fathoms in the earth, and deeper than did ever plummet sound I'll drown my book. (Solemn music)"

—Caroline Shaw

II. Ariel

Come unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands:
Curtsied when you have, and kissed
The wild waves whist,
Foot it feately here, and there, and sweet sprites bear
the burden.
[Burden dispersedly, within]
Hark, hark, bow wow: the watchdogs bark, bow wow.
[Burden dispersedly, within]
Hark, hark, I hear, the strain of strutting Chanticleer
Cry cock-a-diddle-dow.
Full fathom five thy father lies,
Of his bones are coral made:
Those are pearls that were his eyes,
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea change
Into something rich and strange:
Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell.
[Burden: ding dong.]
Hark now I hear them, ding dong bell.

III. Caliban

Be not afeard. The isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears, and sometimes voices
That, if I then had waked after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again; and then, in dreaming,
The clouds methought would open, and show riches
Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked
I cried to dream again.

IV. Prospero

You elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves,
And you that on the sands with printless foot
Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him
When he comes back; you demi-puppets that
By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make,
Whereof the ewe not bites; and you whose pastime
Is to make midnight mushrumps, that rejoice
To hear the solemn curfew; by whose aid,
Weak masters though you be, I have bedimmed
The noontide sun, called forth the mutinous winds,
And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault

Set roaring war; to the dread rattling thunder
Have I given fire, and rifted Jove's stout oak
With his own bolt; the strong-based promontory
Have I made shake, and by the spurs plucked up
The pine and cedar; graves at my command
Have waked their sleepers, oped, and let 'em forth
By my so potent art. But this rough magic
I here abjure, and when I have required
Some heavenly music, which even now I do,
To work mine end upon their senses that
This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I'll drown my book.
(Solemn music)

LOGGINS-HULL *FRICTION*

Program note by Hannah Edgar

In April 2024, Allison Loggins-Hull's father, Dan Loggins, passed away. The two had been distant, but they reconnected for a brief, intense period as his health declined. Parallels between Loggins-Hull's life and her father's, long overlooked, suddenly seemed fated. Like the overlap in their personal music tastes, plainly written across the thousands of records she inherited from him. Or his own musicianship, as a talented amateur able to play multiple instruments—including the flute, the instrument with which his daughter would become associated as one-half of the duo Flutronix. And though Loggins-Hull's son and her father never met, she has been struck by their uncannily similar talents for visual art.

The sounds of her and her father's shared past run against each other in *FRICTION*. Loggins-Hull and Roomful of Teeth developed the seven-song suite over two consecutive summers at MASS MoCA's sprawling museum campus in the Berkshires, where Roomful of Teeth spend their summers. In the work—which can vary from 45 minutes to an hour in live performance—Loggins-Hull joins Roomful of Teeth on flute and voice, often mediated through electronics. The Roomful of Teeth singers' unique voices also inspired the many effects in *FRICTION*—like the insectoid buzzes in the verdant, extended intro to “Honesty,” or soprano Estelí Gomez's high, *grito*-esque streaks across “Sorry.”

Loggins-Hull has become increasingly intrigued by the slippery boundaries between perception of processed and acoustic sound. For example, *Can You See?*, commissioned during her recent Daniel R. Lewis composer fellowship with the Cleveland Orchestra, is purely acoustic but mimics electronic effects. *FRICTION* takes the conceit to new heights. The title nods not only to the piece's central sonic tension but to the dread Loggins-Hull felt about discussing her father's death so openly. “I needed to confront various sources of friction,” she says.

She does, head-on, from the work's opening bars. The first song, “Neuro,” is a meta-rumination on anxiety and mental health, relayed through hypnotic, semi-incanted, triadic harmony. “DEI,” the third song, is Loggins-Hull's tongue-in-cheek response to being branded a “DEI hire.” The phrase “she's DEI” is fractured across the ensemble—“she's” sustained as long tones ascending stepwise, “DEI” bounced around the choir in

chirruping, computerized-sounding hockets. Later, a thrumming pulse kicks off “Token,” whose central refrain—“None of the girls are Black”—is taken up by Loggins-Hull and distorted, low doubles.

Other parts of the cycle are rawer still. “Dan,” the penultimate song, wends itself around a sample of Loggins-Hull’s father, recorded in the hospital. The Roomful of Teeth singers echo his words, over a high-pitched, almost oppressive electronic backdrop. Before that, “The Thread,” the second song, transports the listener to a family memorial gathering for Loggins-Hull’s father. Amid the hearty chatter, Loggins-Hull’s uncle declares that “the thread in the Loggins family was always music.”

True to the song’s name, Loggins-Hull manages to stitch together disparate musical components. King Crimson’s “Epitaph” gets looped into a slow, R&B-esque groove; lush vocals and flute references to Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring* float over it. With *FRICTION*, Loggins-Hull hasn’t just inherited her father’s musical collection: She’s living it.

The Middlebury Performing Arts Series co-commissioned FRICTION through its membership in the national consortium Music Accord.

Libretto

I. Neuro

Obsessive thoughts pervasive stress,
impairing dreams I’m feeling less.
Every step forward feels like to back
living this mental Maz. I’m off track.
Hyper focus response.
It’s the same old story,
disruptive behavior like it’s mandatory.
Combine type psychiatric flight,
every day is a battle try to get right.

II. The Thread

The Thread.

III. DEI

DEI.
She’s. DEI.
She’ll. Steal.
We’ll. Steal.
She’s. DEI.

IV. Sorry

Don’t feel sorry for yourself.
Don’t feel.
Sorry.

V. Token

None of the girls are black.
Who do you trust? Who can be safe?
Who will comply? Who gives you grace?
Me? None of the girls are black. Just me.

Are you afraid of anger? Are you afraid of embarrassment?
Are you afraid of anger? Are you afraid of embarrassment or me?
None of the girls are black. Just me.
Me. It's me? It's me. It's me. Just me.

What exactly are you looking for? What exactly do you need?
Am I what you're looking for? Am I what you need me?
None of those girls are me. None of those girls are.
None of those girls are me. None of those girls are.

I'm not angry. I won't argue.
I'll comply. I'm safe.
I understand. I won't embarrass.
I'll smile. Trust. Me?

Don't be angry. Don't be angry.
Don't be angry. Don't be angry me.
None of the girls are black.
Just me.

VI. Dan

Believe it
Leave it be.
My life, a scar
Every episode
My life, a scar

VII. Honesty

Honesty, you said you'd give to me. Honestly, you said we were a team.
Honestly, it's all you had to be. Honestly, it's what we couldn't be.
Honestly, you said we were a team.

Honesty, you said you'd give to me. Honestly, you said we were a team.
Honestly, it's all you had to be. Honestly, it's what you couldn't be.
Honestly, it's what I couldn't see. Honestly, it's what we couldn't be.
Honestly, it's what we couldn't be. Honestly, I can't believe it's weed.

Honesty, you said you'd give to me. Honestly, you said we were a team.
Honestly, it's all you had to be. Honestly, it's what you couldn't be.
Honestly, it's what I couldn't see. Honestly, it's what we couldn't be.
Honestly, it's what we couldn't be. Honestly, I can't believe it's me.

I. Me.
I. Me. I. Criticize.
I criticize. I criticize. Me.
Must be a challenge.

Biographies

Roomful of Teeth

Middlebury performance:

Estelí Gomez
Martha Cluver
Mingjia Chen
Virginia Kelsey
Steven Bradshaw
Thann Scoggin
Dashon Burton
Cameron Beauchamp

Randall Squires, Sound Engineer/Production
Haley Freedlund, Tour Manager



Roomful of Teeth is a Grammy-winning vocal band dedicated to reimagining the expressive potential of the human voice. By engaging collaboratively with artists, thinkers, and community leaders from around the world, the group seeks to uplift and amplify voices old and new while creating and performing meaningful and adventurous music.

Founded in 2009 by Brad Wells, the band was incubated at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA) in North Adams, Massachusetts, where members studied with some of the world's most extraordinary singers and teachers. Through experimentation, exploration, and plenty of failures, the group learned that the boundaries of the human voice are never what they seem, that rules can be bent, even broken, and perhaps they should be.

Through their unique collaborative process, Roomful of Teeth has worked with many of today's most compelling musical creators to build a significant and continuously growing repertoire. They have collaborated with a wide range of artists and ensembles spanning genres and art forms.

As the world rapidly changes, Roomful of Teeth is cultivating deeper relationships with technology, continuing to explore and expand the artistic reach of the human voice. They are excited about new collaborative projects focused on stories of place, home, and community in diverse environments around the world. They explore, learn, and collaborate with passionate curiosity, contagious enthusiasm, and deep gratitude.

roomfulofteeth.org

Allison Loggins-Hull

Celebrated as a musical “powerhouse” (*The Washington Post*), Allison Loggins-Hull is a composer, flutist, and producer whose work defies genre, ranging from symphonic music to film scores, chamber, and electronic music.

Her signature style of composing for orchestra is characterized by unique sonic effects that echo contemporary music production techniques. Her works are profoundly influenced by Black American music, creating a vibrant and kaleidoscopic sonic palette. Thematically, her compositions are deeply rooted in the experiences of community, culture, and life, offering a rich and evocative musical narrative. Her artistic reflections on Black stories, music, and experience have led to works aligned with Afrofuturism, a movement that imagines alternate realities and a liberated future viewed through the lens of Black cultures.

In her newest appointment, Loggins-Hull serves as Resident Artistic Partner to the New Jersey Symphony for a term that began in September 2024. The 2024–2025 season marked her last of three years as the Lewis Composer Fellow with the Cleveland Orchestra, an engagement that focused on the narratives and history of Cleveland through the prism of one of the world’s great orchestras, culminating in three world premieres.

Loggins-Hull has performed as an accompanist to major pop acts including Lizzo and Frank Ocean. She has performed on multiple blockbuster film scores and composed the score for *Bring Them Back*, an award-winning documentary executive-produced by Debbie Allen about the legendary dancer Maurice Hines.

Loggins-Hull received a 2025 Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and lives in Montclair, NJ, with her family.

allisonloggins.com



Roomful of Teeth and Allison Loggins-Hull appear in collaboration with Pink Noise Agency.
pinknoiseagency.com



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We remember their connection to this region and the hardships they continue to endure.

We give thanks for the opportunity to share in the bounty of this place and to protect it.