

# Roomful of Teeth

**Start time:** 7.30pm

**Approximate end time:** 9.15pm, including a 20-minute interval

Please note all timings are approximate and subject to change.

## Programme

**Caroline Shaw** *The Isle*

**Angélica Negrón** *math, the one which is sweet*

**Leilehua Lanzilotti** *On Stochastic Wave Behavior* (European premiere)

**Alev Lenz** *7 planets* (world premiere)

1. Mercury
2. Venus
3. Mars
4. Jupiter
5. Saturn
6. Uranus
7. Neptune

**Grammy-winning vocal group Roomful of Teeth returns with new music by composers celebrated for breaking down cultural boundaries.**

### 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 account 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 end of the piece (the murmuring voices) is a 24-chord progression that includes (for fun) all major and minor triads of the western 12-note system. 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

### math, the one which is sweet

*math, the one which is sweet* is the sound of getting lost in new love – of giving in to excitement, savouring anticipation, surrendering to daydreams. It’s the thrill of getting to know someone new, and the lens of tenderness through which everything about them is perceived. It dismantles and plays with the false dichotomies of love: logic and emotion, order and abandon, repression and disinhibition. It’s an invitation to these dualities, like two people falling in love, to coexist in the dazed delight of new-found connection. This piece speaks to the intimacy and vulnerability inherent in giving, receiving and letting go of love.

© Angélica Negrón

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## On Stochastic Wave Behavior

Wayfinding, observing nature and respecting the ocean have been present since my childhood growing up in Hawai'i. So, when geologist Rónadh Cox and artist Brad Wells asked me to be part of the National Science Foundation-funded 'A few waves do most of the work' project, I felt very connected to the ideas of integrating knowledge and research about the ocean into classrooms.

Reclaiming language and supporting indigenous language revitalisation have been essential to my artistic work in the past year. Connecting to language and meeting up with my family every weekend to support safe learning environments – both of these actions influenced a new way of approaching my compositional practice. A language that is changing, that is evolving, that is new is alive. Similarly, haku mele (compositional) practices that engage new sounds through an indigenous lens embrace 'Ōlelo Hawai'i as an active part of the creative process.

Indigenous communities often struggle to remain 'authentic,' pushing up against archaic stereotypes and a genuine desire to preserve culture. In *Paradoxes of Hawaiian Sovereignty*, J Kehaulani Kauanui writes:

'In the US context, as Kevin Bruyneel argues, one of the defining elements of American colonial rule is the fastening of Indigenous Peoples to the concept of "colonial time" by locating them "out of time", where they are not allowed modernity. This "shackling indigenous identity to an archaic form" upholds the concept of authentic Indigenous Peoples always being already primitive/static (positioned to continuously struggle for recognition of their humanity), while the coloniser is always characterised as civilized/advanced, thereby rationalising domination of Indigenous Peoples as a form of "progress". It is this enduring notion of the "savage" that continues to be used by states in their attempt to justify political subordination, such as the "domestic dependent nation" status subject to US plenary power in the case of federally recognised tribal nations.'

There is much more to discover about the revitalisation of indigenous language, but I like the idea that Prof Cox's research extends to include metaphors for that movement: a few waves can make a difference and have made our work as Kanaka Maoli artists relevant to today's dynamic landscape where science and indigenous knowledge celebrate the power of nature. Through radical indigenous contemporaneity, this work hopes to make those connections both in the classroom and in the community.

© Leilehua Lanzilotti

## 7 planets

Exploring the planets, their wondrous influences on us and our magical togetherness in the solar system has piqued my interest ever since I spotted a glowing Venus in the night sky in the spring of 2020. A vision that became a fixture for many months while the world seemed to spin out of orbit and our realities rapidly changed. Observing the planets became a solace, their consistency offering a night-time comfort at a time when there wasn't any around us.

During that time I stumbled upon a video that encouraged musicians to 'ditch the pitch' and, due to my Turkish heritage, I was already familiar and comfortable with quarter tones, so this led me to dive deeper into the possibilities of singing to the planetary frequencies.

The voice is such a unique instrument, why not take it beyond the five lines of a staff? Having previously worked with Roomful of Teeth, I couldn't think of a better constellation of singers to go on this 'out-of-pitch-and-space-journey' with me.

Since planetary frequencies are too low for tuning chords on regular resonator boxes, I had to get creative about how to do this analogue. After some thought, I unstrung a guitar, cut off its neck, stuck a tuning fork holder on top and built the tuning fork resonator. Subsequently I travelled to see Roomful of Teeth at their 2022 residency at Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art and this yielded the pieces 'Mercury', 'Venus', 'Mars', 'Jupiter', 'Saturn', 'Uranus' and 'Neptune'. All were written on the planetary frequencies that exist outside concert pitch and they honour the planets of our solar system that travel alongside us through time and space.

© Alev Lenz

## The Isle

### Ariel

Come unto these yellow sands,  
And then take hands:  
Curtsied when you have, and kissed  
The wild waves whist,  
Foot it featy 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.

### 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.

### 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)

## math, the one which is sweet

sand of each beach  
where i forgot i was a body  
sea of grape and dry algae packing material for last  
names  
coding for the time machine that  
between futures eclipses an  
underground  
the rain's dirt  
which approximates the cave's air  
the reef's opening  
where i enter and leave my town  
like we do  
in a bottom where fins glow  
i suddenly cease  
we don't need lungs  
the mouths that kiss the air the olas  
math  
the one which is sweet  
completely  
a language for when we are a hybrid  
of plane and gull  
your voice  
its convex exactitude  
the chunk of satellite that collapsed  
towards the water's celestial cemetery  
like that

Text by Raquel Salas Rivera

## On Stochastic Wave Behavior

### ō

ō	2. vi. To remain, endure, survive, continue, go on, exist; continuing ... <i>Ke ō nei nō kēlā mele</i> , that song still survives now.
‘ō	1. loc. n. There, yonder, beyond
‘ōpikipiki.	nvs. Anxiety, mental disturbance; agitated, as the sea.
pikipiki / pikipiki’ō.	vs. Rough, stormy, choppy, as the sea. <i>Fig.</i> , agitated in spirit.
kiki	4. vt. to kiss <i>Eng. Rare</i> .
kikī	1. vi. To flow swiftly, spout; to spurt, as water from a hose
kikī	1 ... <i>Waikīkī</i> (name), spouting water [a reference to the many springs and streams in the Waikīkī <i>ahupua’a</i> that extended far inland].
kikiki	2. Short for ‘ <i>ūkikiki</i> , a fish. 3. n. A bird. 4. Same as ‘ <i>i’i</i> or <i>makali’i</i> , tiny.
kikikiki	1. To mend, as a crack in a wooden bowl.

### nāueue

nāueue, nauweuwe	Redup. of <i>nauē</i>
ho’onāueue	To cause to sway back and forth.
ne’e he’e	Vi. To creep along, as a child or octopus. <i>Lit.</i> , octopus hitch.
ne’ene’e	1. Redup. of <i>ne’e</i> . [creep.] <i>ne’ene’e ā pili</i> to move close by, snuggle.

### nā’ū

nā’ū	4. vi. Sighing deeply; to prolong the breath, especially in a children’s game at Kona: children would make a prolonged <i>u</i> -sound just at sunset, believing that the sun would not set as long as they held their breath; to play <i>nā’ū</i> . <i>Hā’ule naoa ka wai a ke kēhau, ke nā’ū lā nā kamali’i</i> (chant for Kamehameha II), the water of the <i>kēhau</i> mist falls rippling as the children play <i>nā’ū</i> .*
nāueue, nauweuwe	Redup. of <i>nauē</i> .
nauē, nauwe	vi. To move, shake, rock, sway, tremble; to quake, as the earth; to vibrate; to march; loose and insecure, as a tooth; revolving, as hips in a hula. . . .
ho’onaue	To cause to shake, revolve, sway, rock; to disturb. <i>Ka ua hō’oni, ho’onaue i ka pu’u ko’a</i> , the rain sways in a dance and shakes the coral pile.

### nalukai

nāu	<i>n</i> -poss. Yours, belonging to you, for you, by you (singular, <i>a</i> -form; Gram. 9.11.)
nāu mai ā na’u aku	Your turn and then mine
na’u	<i>n</i> -poss. Mine, belonging to me, for me, by me (singular, <i>a</i> -form; Gram. 9.11.)
nalū	1. nvi. Wave, surf; full of waves; to form waves; wavy, as wood grain. <i>Ke nalū nei ka moana</i> . The ocean is full of waves.
ho’onalū	To form waves. (PPN <i>gnalu</i> .) 2. vt. To ponder, meditate, reflect, mull over, speculate ... 3. n. Amnion, amniotic fluid. (PPN, PCP <i>lanu</i> ; note Hawaiian metathesis.)

nalukai vs. Weatherworn, as old canoes or persons who have weathered the storms of life. *Lit.*, ocean wave.

nalunалу vs. Rough, of a sea with high waves; to form high waves. (PPN *ngalungalu*.)

*Hawaiian Dictionary*. Edited by Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H Elbert  
(Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986)

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