

# Jordan Morton, Double Bass

Graduate Recital  
April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 – 7pm  
University of California San Diego  
Conrad Prebys Music Center  
Experimental Theater

Nelson Moneo, violin  
Ben Rempel, percussion  
Dan King, percussion

oibinnadocS

Håkon Thelin

Suite Myth

Jordan Morton

*Fable*  
*The Hare*  
*In Which Lilith Ditches the Garden of Eden*  
*Palm to Chest*  
*Compromise*

Drifting, Aglow

Anthony Vine

Amarchord

Håkon Thelin

## Notes

***oibinnadocS*** (2004) is an escapade through the colorful and dense improvisatory language of Norwegian bassist, researcher and composer Håkon Thelin. Exploiting a complex, accessible, and almost ubiquitous lattice of natural harmonic nodes planted throughout the fingerboard, Thelin creates sounds, lines and textures otherwise unimaginable on the instrument. Jagged melodies burst forth from a single chromatic fingering. Sliding false harmonics shape suspensions and resolutions. Rich, unstable chords splinter out from multiphonic nodes, clustering around the serene presence of a neighboring harmonic. Using this vastly extended range and palate, Thelin's compositional fixation lies in the expressive evolution of a phrase as it moves between dissonance and consonance.

In the bass community, the tradition of the performer-composer is especially prominent and profound. Much of our solo repertoire is and has been generated by the players themselves over several generations. Thelin acknowledges this special lineage with the title of this piece, for *oibinnadocS* is a semi-palindrome – a tribute to the great Italian bassist and composer Stefano Scodannibio.

***Suite Myth*** (2016-18) for violin, voice, bass, and percussion, is a set of songs, sketches and sculpted improvisations in five connected movements. Its premiere represents a two-year obsession with the function and potential of myth-space, and the desire to create it. Myth and metaphor sway us in ways that faith and reason cannot. Little fictions wield immense and undetected power. Daily archetypes assemble the outlook of entire populations. If society's myths are its guts, then maybe it's time to hatch new ones – or go foraging amongst the most potent tall tales of the ancients.

For me, the ringing potential of the bass is an entire chimerical landscape filled with myths. My vocal practice grew out of the necessity to relay them. For this, I still find song form a formidable vehicle. The hymns of my youth are forever lurking in my musical dark room. I design for their decay, and enjoy the process.

*Suite Myth* is made up of songs and fragments of songs, myths and fragments of myths. Some arose in response to a jarring move from the dense, green east to the clear, dry, desertous west. Some were provoked by critical studies of sound and violence, ancient legends reimagined, or sheer modern angst. Still others are just the bizzarities of solitude. And one came rambling in with the fogs of distant forest fires, veiling neighboring mountains in the Canadian Rockies.

This music is deeply indebted to my collaborators, Ben Rempel and Nelson Moneo. They have each guided and motivated the music in its various stages, and it is a rare privilege to present it in performance with them tonight.

***Drifting, Aglow*** (2016) was one of my first collaborations at UCSD. The process of working with Anthony, whose compositional approach mirrored some elements of my performance practice, yielded a singularly beautiful piece. The bass is tuned in a scordatura and limited to harmonics and open strings. Bowed almglocken serve to mirror, illuminate, extend, and mask the identity of the bass, and voice is used in a delicate union with certain harmonics. Within this soft, fragile, and detuned palate, a single melodic sequence takes on the form of a "song," obscured and deconstructed. While so much music is designed to be reproducible, *Drifting Aglow* remains a magical variable, due to the sheer fragility of its materials and the unique sounds of the performers and friends for whom it was written.

***Amarchord*** (2003) uses the bass more akin to a lute or guitar. Both left and right hands determine and activate pitch in a complex choreography of five different pizzicato techniques, including harp harmonics, and notes simultaneously held and plucked with the left hand. Bi-tones lend a microtonal quality to the piece, created by plucking the length of the string behind the finger placement. With the instruction from the composer to "keep all the tones ringing as long as possible," *Amarchord* becomes a microcosm of polyphony through resonance.

*This performance is dedicated to the Villafranca family.  
Thank you for your friendship, patience, compassion and sanity.*

suite myth.

Fable they found it they found it trembling in the ruins of a hymn

Thumb to cheek revelation weak but the kill is strong  
Pressure provides for us when the night is long

Stories we told us we told us are catching up

When science fails to cure the mind of its dark disease  
Pressure, revive us for the slow release

Children too ancient to carry all growling in your chest

Lift them out of your throat wide open and leave the rest  
Winding behind you but you've just begun  
Pressure demands of us to come undone

<<<< encounter a giant, foreboding hare, tied to a stake in your garden >>>>

out of the garden green

steal away

heart and my lips unclean

so I cease to pray

soles to the burning earth

for I dare to call you by name

hear me, show thy face!

did you not breathe life

into this dirt divine?

now you cut the fruit from the vine ...

