

***Proximate Spaces* – Program Note**

Matt Gillespie is one of my favorite people. I have great respect for him as a musician, scholar, and— most important— a human being. He has been a very close and important friend to me over the past few years and I have long wished to write a concerto in his honor. When I first set to the task of creating a work for him, I became attracted to the idea of incorporating one of his personal passions – history – into the piece. However, my own extra-musical curiosities got the better of me and I decided to shape the work around contemporary ideas in theoretical physics. The formal continuity of the work was suggested by competing ideas of the 1990's surrounding the search for a unified theory to explain the fundamental forces, dimensional composition, and existence of matter in the known universe. Still, since my inspiration has been, primarily, the *dialogue* between separate proponents in physics (notably Nahm and de Wit in eleven dimensions and Green, Schwartz and Gross in ten), there is an historical element to the work.

Much of the pitch material derives from a two-octave mode (18 pitches in series) and three subset hexachords of that mode. The work develops the tension between mechanistic devotion to this mode and episodes of free chromaticism, between strictly repeating rhythmic patterns and rhythmic variation, between instrumentation according to families and a free exchange of musical ideas regardless of instrumental relation. Initially aligned with the mechanistic paradigms of mode and regular rhythmic patterns, the soloist breaks free and attempts to incite revolt against the piece's system by abandoning strict adherence to these structures. Although some members of the ensemble briefly depart from the system, ultimately – and especially rhythmically – the machine prevails.