A Minor Tiff
  Corey DeGraw
  Robert Dufau, Siobhan Williams, cellos

88
  Nick Norton
  William Fried, piano

Densities
  Nick Norton
  William Fried, piano

Excerpts from “An Everchanging House”
  Nick Norton
  Kimberly Turney, flute

The Grand Question Subliminal
  Corey DeGraw
  Sarah Sabler, Mary Okhotin, Brian Chan, Alec Lungwitz, singers

Intermission

Under a Neon Sky
  Nick Norton
  I. The Haze Clears
  II. Troposphere
  III. Magnetopause
  IV. The Body is Made of Light
  V. Geohomification
  Nick Norton, conductor

please turn off cell phones
COREY DEGRAW
Upon entering this place, I had no idea the shock I was in for. The music department here is truly a special place. Without the wonderful guidance and advice the faculty have given me during my stay, I would have not pushed myself to think, really think about what music can be. My notions of sound organization, the “right” way to go about performing, composing, or even listening to the work of others who have given themselves to this art before me, were completely and utterly wiped clean and restructured within an atmosphere that lays no boundaries upon creativity and expression...as long as we can back it up with some form of explanation. I am very grateful to this department, and I believe I will find no other that offers me the opportunity to create what I wish and push myself in directions that I would not have otherwise been encouraged to turn. I must go forth and explore the other spheres of this art I have decided to become a part of and develop myself further by experiencing everything offered, but I hope to be afforded the opportunity to return here and work with the outstanding musical minds residing here, all of which I respect immensely.

I am also grateful for my family, friends, and peers who have supported me and put up with my antics all this time. I wouldn’t be anywhere without you. Thanks to my parents for supporting and aiding me throughout my life. Thanks to my friends for boundless amounts of entertainment. Thanks to the composition faculty for hollering at me and encouraging me to push myself in ways I thought I could not. A hugely sincere thanks to all the musicians performing my works tonight for pulling through for a young composer. I owe you guys big. Thank you also to the audience. Without people willing to listen, our music cannot live. Please enjoy and thank you for your support.
A Minor Tiff
This duet is intended to simulate an argument between two individuals. The harmonic structure and interactions between the two cellists are designed to produce some measure of discomfort to the listener. At the same time, the piece is meant to be enjoyable by means of engaging the audience by involving them in a highly personal situation.

The Grand Question Subliminal
I attempted to remove the notion of standardized and deliberately illustrated time. Much like nearly imperceptible sounds floating past you on the breeze, the lines contained within the piece accuse and question, support and deny. They build upon each other through means of quiet contradiction, ultimately finalizing and moving onto some other destination. They end what they want to say without giving you, the listener, a sense of finality. It exists in a space it defines by itself and then is simply gone.

NICK NORTON
I would like to thank Lei Liang, Harvey Sollberger, Rand Steiger, and Chinary Ung, for helping me to realize my ideas in music, and Colin McAllister for his guitar instruction, advice, and trips to Mexico. Thanks also to anyone I have ever performed with and learned from, argued with about music, or who has shown me something I’ve never heard, and to everyone who is performing tonight. Thanks, most importantly, to my friends, family, girlfriend, and mom for being here, because without you this wouldn’t be worth it.

88
In this piece, which I wrote on Catalina Island during the summer of 2007, the performer strikes each key of the piano once and only once. It was first performed on September 18 at the Brooklyn Center for New Music, and later recorded by William Fried.
Densities
Huge thanks, and a dedication, go to my good friend Ian Crandell for his help with the math in Densities. I tried typing up an explanation of all of the operations we performed on the main melody (see if you can find/figure out which one it is), but doing so would cost the music department so much in printing programs that I decided against it. The piece is also dedicated to Lei Liang, for the extremely high standard he is holding me to (you are actually hearing a draft of the piece, the final version has a few more weeks of work). William Fried learned this piece in a little over a week for this concert, and so deserves much gratitude for this first performance.

An Everchanging House
This I consider my first complete piece of concert music. It began as an assignment for Harvey Sollberger, to compose a short piece using only five pitches. I ended up writing about eight minutes of music, for him to perform on flute, and he liked it enough to encourage me to write a second movement, which ended up being the first movement, entitled A Staircase! I had just finished reading Mark Danielewski’s House of Leaves at the time and liked the idea of a shifting structure, the design of which is hidden anyone inside of it. For A Staircase! the five pitches are transposed down by a half step over and over, with each transposition occurring after a length of time determined by a Fibonacci sequence. I tried to use the musical material to hide the changes in step, so that the structure is imperceptible to the listener.

Under a Neon Sky
Two major things, musically, were happening in my life through the writing process of this piece. I was reading a lot of the philosophies of different composers, and trying to decide whom I agreed and disagreed with, and figure out what had yet to be said, and what I could take to use in my own way. That process continues to this day, and I hope it doesn’t
end anytime soon. I was also becoming very interested in minimalism, especially the music of Steve Reich, and its influence on post-rock bands like Godspeed, Belle Orchestre, and Explosions in the Sky. Seeking to combine a few philosophies, I wrote a relatively simple piece, with regards to harmony, melody and rhythm, and, borrowing from Reich, hocketted it, or split it up between parts, beyond recognition. Then, taking some indeterminacy from Cage, scored it for “any 12 instruments,” guaranteeing a unique performance each time, while maintaining the musical material of my choice, and also tying harmony to instrumentation in a new way. Some of the limits of this have since become apparent, and I may rescore it for a set instrumentation in the future. The movements refer to a dream journey through the different layers of the atmosphere, which I became interested in while reading Bill Bryson’s A Short History of Nearly Everything.