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# Nick Vasallo MONUMENTS EMERGE

**Monuments Emerge** chronicles the work of prolific Asian-American composer **Nicholas Vasallo**, spanning a period from 2007 to 2012. Fusing Western classical music, Asian classical music, and heavy metal (he is a member of *Antagonism and Oblivion*), Vasallo's work plumbs the inner depths where these traditions come together, finding their roots in order to draw them out into expansive sonic landscapes.

Album opener "Antares Rising" blends a traditional Western wind ensemble with a Japanese taiko drum group; the collision of the two creating a texture greater than the sum of its parts. "Evanescent Revolutions" evokes Conlon Nancarrow's oeuvre of player piano works, working in sections to explore the breadth of the keyboard via repetition and expansion.

Things get a bit more metal on "Explosions in the Sky," a piece scored for horn, piano, violin, viola, cello, and percussion. For all its thoughtful harmonic development, no self-respecting metal fan would have a problem banging his or her head to this one. That aesthetic finds a further development in "Collapsing Obsidian Sun," where Vasallo explores the timbral contrasts between the traditional Korean haegum and the Western violin. If the violin is like a clean guitar, the haegum is an overdriven one, with the cello providing drive in the lower register.

Throughout *Monuments Emerge*, Vasallo is pulling threads together, even as he seeks to push at the boundaries that have traditionally separated musical traditions. With transcendence the goal, the results are often intensely austere. Vasallo is an explorer of sound, melting and repurposing his materials, always in search of new horizons.

#### PERFORMERS:

UCSC Wind Ensemble, Rob Klevan, Watsonville Taiko, Ikuyo Conant, Monika Warchol, Alisa Rose, Alexa Beattie, Adaiha Macadam-Somer, Hillary Nordwell, Camille Chitwood, Contemporary Music Ensemble Korea, Del Sol String Quartet, Soo-Neon Chung, Kate Stenberg, Hannah Addario-Berry, UCSC Resident String Ensemble, John Bissett, Camille Chitwood, Navid Aberg, Lucas Helland, Kumi Uyeda, Daniel Brown, Adnan Ibrahim, Sara L. Hancock, Anthony Calónico, Adam Louie, John Bissett, Lucas Helland, Navid Aberg, Leah Bowden, Kumi Uyeda, Camille Chitwood, Ariose Singers, Michael McGushin, Oblivion



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[www.nickvasallo.com](http://www.nickvasallo.com)

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1. ANTARES RISING (2010)
2. EVANESCENT REVOLUTIONS (2008): I. Implosion
3. EVANESCENT REVOLUTIONS (2008): II. Bhaskara
4. EVANESCENT REVOLUTIONS (2008): III. Happiness Only Real When Shared
5. EXPLOSIONS IN THE SKY (2009)
6. TRANSIENT REFLECTIONS (2007): I. Intertwine...unwind
7. TRANSIENT REFLECTIONS (2007): II. The Abyss
8. TRANSIENT REFLECTIONS (2007): III. Stained Glass Window
9. ELEMENTS OF METAL (2009): I. Collapsing Obsidian Sun
10. SHADES OF DECEMBER (2010)
11. ELEMENTS OF METAL (2011): II. Omnes Perituri
12. FIVE (2011) I. Overtones
13. FIVE (2011) II. I Vent In On
14. THE VERTIGO SERIES (2008): IV. The Battle Within
15. THE FIFTH WORLD (2009): I. Cynosure: A New Phase
16. THE FIFTH WORLD (2009): II. The Rise of Blue
17. THE FIFTH WORLD (2009): III. Purification Time
18. THE FIFTH WORLD (2009): IV. Messengers From the Sky
19. THE VERTIGO SERIES (2009): V. The Aftermath
20. OBLIVION (2012)