



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

THIRD COAST PERCUSSION'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY ALBUM, *STANDARD STOPPAGES*, TO BE RELEASED ON CEDILLE RECORDS, APRIL 11

Featuring works by Jlin, Tigran Hamasyan, Zakir Hussain, Jessie Montgomery, and Musekiwa Chingodza, the album celebrates the ensemble's legacy of musical collaboration and artistic growth since its founding in 2005



Chicago, IL (March 13, 2025) – Praised for its “rare power” (*Washington Post*) and “dazzling rhythmic workouts” (*Pitchfork*), GRAMMY® Award-winning **Third Coast Percussion (TCP)** celebrates its 20th anniversary with ***Standard Stoppages***, a new full-length album to be released on Cedille Records **Friday, April 11, 2025**.

The recording explores the passage of time, both through the eyes of percussionists charged with “keeping time” for an ensemble, and on the grander scale of time elapsed over decades. In the creation of this album, TCP reconnected with some of its favorite past collaborators along with musicians they have dreamed of collaborating with for years, including **Jlin, Musekiwa Chingodza, Jessie Montgomery, Tigran Hamasyan**, and the late **Zakir Hussain**.

“We’re fortunate that the past 20 years have been full of inspiration and joy for our ensemble,”

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the TCP artists said of their upcoming release. “We’ve seen extraordinary moments and met extraordinary challenges. We are so thankful for the time we have had together, and we are reminded never to take it for granted. We feel very fortunate to be able to spend our time making music with each other. Percussionists are in the time-keeping business. Other musicians often look to us to create a rhythmic framework, a steady beat within which the music unfolds. One of the joys of being a band of four percussionists is that we often explore how time can be stretched, manipulated, played with, and reimagined. Our collaborators on this album helped us to do just that.”

The musical selections on *Standard Stoppages* depict a range of unique reflections on the passage of time. The album opens with **Jlin’s *Please Be Still***, a piece inspired by a 275-year-old work by J.S. Bach. A lover of Bach’s music since childhood, Jlin reimagines materials from the “Kyrie Eleison” movement of J.S. Bach’s Mass in B Minor with a focus on Bach’s rhythmic vocabulary. The piece was composed in collaboration with TCP in a similar process to that which yielded Jlin’s 2023 Pulitzer-finalist work, *Perspective*.

Tigran Hamasyan’s *Sonata for Percussion* is a three-movement work that bends and stretches time through the composer’s fantastically complicated rhythmic language. Drawing from his own past, with such movement titles as “Memories from Childhood,” Hamasyan places his rhythmic vocabulary within a traditional classical music form as he weaves asymmetrical rhythms into compelling counterpoint. The composer weaves together memorable melodic lines that transcend the mathematics of their complex rhythmic skeletons.

Zakir Hussain’s *Murmurs in Time* represents the late tabla master’s only composition for a classical percussion group, though his career was filled with collaborations with percussionists of all kinds, and explorations of the special bond between “fellow rhythmists.” This two-movement work echoes with memories of Hussain’s personal history beginning with the childhood experience of singing rhythms alongside his father and Guru, the famous tabla player Ustad Alla Rakha. These vocalizations of drum sounds (“bols”), an important element of the Hindustani classical music tradition, feature prominently in the first movement of *Murmurs in Time*. The composition’s second movement also uses a rhythmic cycle inspired by his father, characterized by a balance of strictly composed material and opportunities for improvisation. Hussain highlighted this compositional openness in his program notes, writing, “It is important that respect is given to the artists that I’m working with, by allowing them to be able to find their own way in the piece that I’m presenting. I love to see how it comes back to me in a different costume.”

Hussain himself recorded the work in studio with Third Coast Percussion in October 2024, just weeks before his passing in December of that year. He had originally been set to perform with the quartet on a live national tour, which was subsequently recast as a tribute to the late artist. Together with Hussain’s family, TCP engaged tabla artist Salar Nader, a disciple of Hussain’s, to perform for the tour, which brought performances in five cities during February and March 2025.

In **Jessie Montgomery’s *Study No. 1***, TCP features a key composition in their years-long artistic relationship. The piece was originally composed for the **Percussive Arts Society’s International Convention**, where TCP’s real-time creative contributions made them a “musical laboratory” for the composer, yielding the first in their ongoing series of collaborative works.

A second Montgomery work on the recording, her three-movement ***In Color Suite***, emerged during workshops with Third Coast Percussion for her Study No. 1, where she used excerpts from various pre-existing works to experiment with percussion instruments, exploring timbral possibilities, and the blending of sonic colors. TCP member **Sean Connors** was particularly captivated by *In Color* and sought the composer's permission to arrange three movements for percussion quartet, the version heard on the album. His arrangement introduces unique timbral combinations, such as bowed marimba with melodica, whistling and humming in unison with vibraphone, and a wooden rasp drawn across low marimba bars, all of which add a touch of the unexpected to the expressive harmonic language of Montgomery's writing.

Following a joint performance with TCP at Northwestern University in January 2025, Montgomery will join the ensemble for a national tour in April and May 2025. Spotlighting Montgomery as both composer and performer, the tour brings performances of her latest percussion work *Lady Justice / Black Justice*, *The Song*, and features her as violin soloist on Lou Harrison's *Concerto for Violin with Percussion Orchestra*.

The album's final track is **Musekiwa Chingodza's *Dzoka Kumba***, which translates to "Come Back Home" in the Shona language of the composer's native Zimbabwe – capturing a universal sentiment that reminds us of the places and people in whom our personal stories are rooted. The piece was written for the composer's daughter, inviting her to come back to the family's home for care and comfort during a trying time. The recording features Chingodza singing and playing Mbira, a traditional instrument of the Shona people, with TCP supporting on marimba, vibraphone, drumset, sun drum, and hosho (Shona shakers made from dried gourds).

A "TCP 20th" microsite is available at tcp20.thirdcoastpercussion.com with more information on the ensemble's history and milestone engagements.

ABOUT THIRD COAST PERCUSSION

With nearly two decades of exciting and unexpected performances to its name, Chicago-based percussion quartet Third Coast Percussion (TCP) is the first percussion ensemble to win a GRAMMY® Award. Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2025, Third Coast recasts the classical musical experience with a brilliantly varied sonic palette, crafting music to "push percussion in new directions, blurring musical boundaries and beguiling new listeners" (NPR). In its latest of seven total GRAMMY® nominations, TCP's 2023 album *Between Breaths* was nominated for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance in the 2024 GRAMMY® Awards.

Highly collaborative in its commissioning process, TCP has commissioned and premiered new works from Augusta Read Thomas, Philip Glass, Missy Mazzoli, Jlin, Clarice Assad, Gemma Peacocke, Flutronic, Danny Elfman, Tyondai Braxton, Augusta Read Thomas, Devonté Hynes, Georg Friedrich Haas, Donnacha Dennehy, Glenn Kotche, Christopher Cerrone, and David T. Little, plus numerous up-and-coming composers through its *Currents Creative Partnership* program. Jlin's *Perspective*, a TCP commission, was a 2023 finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.

Besides putting its stamp on works by John Cage and Steve Reich, the quartet has created first recordings of commissioned works by Philip Glass, Augusta Read Thomas, Devonté Hynes,

Danny Elfman, Gavin Bryars, Donnacha Dennehy, David T. Little and Ted Hearne – in addition to original Third Coast compositions. The ensemble won its GRAMMY® (Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance) for its recording of Steve Reich’s works for percussion. They have received five additional GRAMMY® nominations as performers, plus a 2021 nomination as composers.

Passionate about connecting with its audience, Third Coast has been praised for “an inspirational sense of fun and curiosity” (*Minnesota Star-Tribune*). The ensemble has toured widely across the U.S. and four continents. Its four members are also accomplished teachers who have developed a wealth of K-12 workshops and family programming, plus educational partnerships benefiting thousands of Chicago students.

Third Coast has produced exciting new art through unlikely collaborations with engineers at the University of Notre Dame, architects at the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, dancers at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and musicians of all genres. The quartet has served as ensemble-in-residence at the University of Notre Dame’s DeBartolo Performing Arts Center (2013-2018) and Denison University (current).

With strong ties throughout Chicago, Third Coast has collaborated with such institutions as Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, the Uniting Voices Chicago choir, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Chicago Humanities Festival, Adler Planetarium, the University of Chicago and numerous Chicago-based composers.

The four members of Third Coast Percussion (Sean Connors, Robert Dillon, Peter Martin and David Skidmore) met while studying percussion at Northwestern University and formed the ensemble in 2005. TCP has since been certified as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization in support of its vision. Members of Third Coast also hold degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Rutgers University, the New England Conservatory and the Yale School of Music.

Follow Third Coast on Instagram (@ThirdCoastPercussion), YouTube (@thirdcoastpercussion), TikTok (@thirdcoastpercussion), Twitter (@ThirdCoastPerc), Facebook (@Third Coast Percussion), and LinkedIn ([linkedin.com/company/third-coast-percussion](https://www.linkedin.com/company/third-coast-percussion)).

ABOUT CEDILLE RECORDS

Launched in November 1989 by James Ginsburg, Grammy Award-winning Cedille Records (pronounced say-DEE) is dedicated to showcasing and promoting the most noteworthy classical artists in and from the Chicago area. A nonprofit record label, Cedille’s mission is to produce and disseminate audiophile recordings presenting the finest classical music performers and composers in and from Chicago. The recordings further the careers and legacies of these Chicago artists as Cedille invests in not only the recordings but in the artists represented on them. The label’s catalog of more than 200 front-line albums brims with attractive, off-the-beaten-path repertoire from the Baroque era to the present day, including world premieres of well over 400 classical compositions. Works from the classical canon, when they do appear, are usually heard in particularly imaginative pairings. Cedille never removes albums from its catalog and each recording is a permanent documentation of the artists’ work. With more than

180 Chicago artists and ensembles, over 80 making their professional recording debuts on the label, Cedille brings the area's most significant classical music artists to a worldwide listening public. Cedille recordings are available on CD, as MP3 and hi-resolution FLAC downloads, and on all major streaming platforms. Learn more Cedille Records and explore the label's catalog at cedillerecords.org.

THIRD COAST PERCUSSION

Standard Stoppages

CEDILLE RECORDS — CDR 90000 236

TRACK LISTING

1. Jlin – *Please Be Still** [5:34]
2. Tigran Hamasyan – *Sonata for Percussion** [22:54]
 - I. *Memories from Childhood* [9:07]
 - II. *Hymn* [3:05]
 - III. *23 for TCP* [9:42]
3. Zakir Hussain – *Murmurs in Time** [22:26]
 - I. *Recitation* [11:09]
 - II. – [11:17]
4. Jessie Montgomery – *Study No. 1** [7:27]
5. Jessie Montgomery – *In Color Suite** (arr. Sean Conoors and Third Coast Percussion) [7:17]
 - I. *Red* [1:21]
 - II. *The Poet* [2:32]
 - III. *Purple* [3:24]
6. Musekwai Chingodza – *Dzoka Kumba** [5:46]

TT: 70:27

*World Premiere Recording

Producers Judith Sherman and Colin Campbell

Engineer Bill Maylone

Assistant Engineer Aidan Connelly, Nick Iacono, and Daniel Quinlan

Studio Assistants Emma Brooks and Samantha Aviles

Mixing Third Coast Percussion, Judith Sherman, and Bill Maylone

Mastering Engineer Joe Lambert

Program Notes Robert Dillon and David Skidmore

Recorded:

Tracks 1- 4 and 7-10: November 4-8, 2024

Tracks 5-6: September 30 - October 2, 2024 at Narwhal Studios, Chicago, IL

Track 11: November 15, 2024 at Rax Trax Chicago, IL

Publishers:

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