



MEDIA RELEASE

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Zeitgeist names Davu Seru as 2017-18 Studio Z Composer-in-Residence

Ushering in a new program that highlights outstanding musicians and performing artists in the Twin Cities, Zeitgeist announces composer/drummer **Davu Seru** as the very first **Studio Z Composer-in-Residence**. As the 2017-2018 Studio Z Composer-in-Residence, Seru will create new work for Zeitgeist and other musicians, develop an ensemble of culturally diverse performers, and curate special events at Studio Z.

Minneapolis native Davu Seru (b. 1978) is known internationally as a free-jazz drummer and performs regularly in jazz, rock and avant-garde improvised music. He currently works in a trio with French clarinetist Catherine Delaunay and French bassist Guillaume Seguron, the bands Click Song (with Marc Anderson), Merciless Ghost (with George Cartwright and Josh Granowski), and is co-leader with Mankwe Ndotsi of The Mother of Masks, an improvising ensemble of poets, storytellers, activists and musicians. His work as a PhD scholar of African and African American literature and culture colors his musical and artistic sensibilities.

Supported by a Cultural Community Partnership grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, Davu will focus his residency on two projects: the composition and performance of *Dead King Mother*, a new work based on a near-forgotten event in civil rights history; and *Scratch Music Year*, a collaborative composing/performing project for trained and untrained musicians.

Dead King Mother

On April 4th, 1968, upon hearing of the news of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Davu's great-uncle, Clarence C. Underwood stood before family on Minneapolis' northside and announced that he was going to kill the first white man that he saw--and he did.

When encountered by the police he raised his hands and remarked, "shoot me, they killed my king."

The last time Davu saw Clarence was at the funeral of the wife he had left behind once he was committed to prison for murder. Reflecting on his sacrifice during the eulogy, Clarence remarked, "those were different times for our people."

The story has been with Davu since early childhood, but is near-forgotten in Twin Cities and U.S. history. *Dead King Mother*, a blues for female vocalist and ensemble, attempts to rewrite this near-forgotten event into North Minneapolis and United States Civil Rights history.

After music and lyrics are composed, the piece will be workshopped, rehearsed and premiered at Studio Z and will feature members of Zeitgeist and No Territory Band.

Scratch Music Year

"How can we establish a ritual that allows a band to create together even when apart? That returns art to the practice of everyday life and away from the specialization we've learned to compartmentalize?"

Inspired by the Scratch Orchestra (c.1969), Davu will convene a group (five total) that includes trained and untrained musicians for a year of collaborative composing and performing. Each musician will carry a journal where they will submit a daily entry of their choosing. Periodic meetings at Studio Z will be spent assembling a hybrid score from each of the member's journals. The composer-performers will be encouraged to include audience participation in their compositions.

More information at zeitgeistnewmusic.org.

About Zeitgeist:

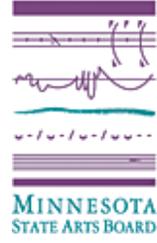
Founded in 1977, Zeitgeist is a new music chamber ensemble consisting of two percussion, piano and woodwinds, and is one of the oldest and most successful new music groups in the country. Based in St. Paul, Minn., the group presents an annual concert series and delivers a wide variety of community-based performance programs for residents of the Twin Cities and the surrounding areas. Zeitgeist's mission is to bring newly created music to life with performances that engage and stimulate. Members are: Heather Barringer, percussion; Patti Cudd, percussion; Pat O'Keefe, woodwinds; Nicola Melville, piano.

Zeitgeist is supported by the The City of St. Paul's Cultural STAR Program, The Amphion Foundation, The Knight Foundation, The Lowertown Future Fund, the Target Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, the Albrecht Family Foundation, the Aaron Copland Fund, The Mandel Family Foundation, and the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature.

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