

Music Notes for Sunday 10/13/24

“Hogan” and “Stars” from *Scenes from Dinétah (2020-24)*

Navajo pianist and composer Connor Chee is known for combining his classical piano training with his Native American heritage. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the University of Cincinnati’s College-Conservatory of Music,

These two pieces were inspired by elements of the Diné culture. Rooted in the rhythms, forms, melodies, and methods of development found in traditional Navaho music, these pieces serve as a harmonious bridge between contemporary expression and cultural heritage.

“Nvni” from *Choctaw Animals (2019)*

Charles Shadle is an accomplished composer who has received commissions from many institutions, including the Handel & Haydn Society, The Syracuse Symphony, and the Rockport Chamber Music Festival, and has taught at MIT for nearly three decades. He was born in Oklahoma as a member of the Choctaw Nation before moving to Colorado and later to Boston.

“Choctaw Animals” is a series of four pieces each reflecting the character of a particular creature. “Nvni” (rhymes with “honey”) means “fish”. Shadle says that “the movements of the fish, as it darts through murky water provided the inspiration for this piece.” Shadle’s work uses the melodic patterns and rhythm of Choctaw dance music without quoting the actual dance songs. In this way, he honors the traditions of his Choctaw musical heritage.

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