Ununoctium is currently the last element on the periodic table. It is a radioactive and very unstable noble gas – only three atoms have ever been detected. This element is so unpredictable that the name Ununoctium is only a temporary name since we do not know the real nature of the element. Like the element, Ununoctium, by Emily R. Lawlor, is unpredictable and subject to change every time it is performed. The piece is made up of three modules containing a few sections of music within each module. In Module I, the oboe and guitar play four sections together: A, B, C and D. For Module II, each player chooses to play A, B, or C in any order they want as long as they are never playing the same section as the other player at the same time. Finally, in Module III, both players play section D together one more time.

Emily Lawlor is in her final year of undergraduate study in composition at UNLV.

Rites of the Little Hours for Percussion Trio by Brian Penkrot was written after hiking in the Swiss Alps. The trail between Lauterbrunnen and Murren runs along several cow pastures which are very noisy, due to cowbells. Bigger and more tuned than the Latin cowbells most Americans are familiar with, the cow songs enter into counterpoint with bells from churches that scatter the valley. The accidental fugues are at once captivating and meditative. Rites of the Little Hours utilizes the traditional antiphons and responsorials from the “little hours” of the church office (Prime, Terce, Sext, and None) in the tubular bells. In contrast to what the cowbells and church bells share in common by existing in the same space and time, the piece also includes drums, highlighting and providing a commentary on the contradiction between the apparent randomness of nature and the rigid formulations of the human psyche. The debate is purposely left undecided.

Brian Penkrot is in his final year of graduate study in composition at UNLV.

The Gods of Pegana by Jason Thorpe Buchanan is based on a 1905 fantasy/alternative creation novel of the same title by Irish author Lord Dunsany that proposes: “There are in Pegana Mung and Sish and Kib (the gods of death, time and life), and the maker of all small gods, who is MANA-YOOD-SUSHAI, who made the gods and hath thereafter rested. And none may pray to MANA-YOOD-SUSHAI but only the gods whom he hath made… Because he was weary after the making of the gods, and because of the drumming of Skarl, did he grow drowsy and fall asleep… But at the last will MANA-YOOD-SUSHAI forget to rest, and will destroy the gods whom he hath made… And there shall be only MANA-YOOD-SUSHAI. But, when at the last the arm of Skarl shall cease to beat his drum, silence shall startle Pegana like thunder in a cave, and MANA-YOOD-SUSHAI shall cease to rest….” The suite you will hear this evening encompasses the first eight of thirty-two chapters.

Jason Thorpe Buchanan is in his final year of graduate study in composition at UNLV.
Nextet Fall Concert No. 2
Featuring works by David Crumb, Brian Penkrot, Emily R. Lawlor & Jason Thorpe Buchanan

Rites of the Little Hours (2009)
Deborah Carpi, percussion
Melody Loveless, percussion
Corene Peltier, percussion

Ununoctium (2009)
Alex Ryuta Hayashi, oboe
Gregory Konig, guitar

The Gods of Pegana (2009)
Donnie Malpass, flutes
Tom Kmiecik, clarinets
K.C. Chai, bassoon
Fred Stone, horn
Crystal Yuan, viola
Zoë Kohen Ley, violoncello
Daniel Alameda, percussion
Melody Loveless, percussion
Anna Kijanowska, piano
Virko Baley, conductor

Improvisations on an English Folk Tune (2005)
Donnie Malpass, flutes
Tom Kmiecik, clarinets
Crystal Yuan, violin
Zoë Kohen Ley, violoncello
Carolyn Villavicencio Grossmann, piano
Virko Baley, Conductor

David Crumb was born in 1962 into a musical family, and studied cello and piano from an early age. Later, he pursued advanced training in cello at the Eastman School (from 1980-85) before ultimately deciding to switch his focus to composition. His first important teacher, Samuel Adler, provided the initial spark that inspired him to pursue this new direction. Following Eastman, he enrolled in graduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania where he studied composition with Chinary Ung, Richard Wernick, Stephen Jaffe, and Jay Reise, and music theory with Leonard Meyer and Eugene Narmour. In the summer of 1987, Crumb received a fellowship to attend the Tanglewood Music Festival where he attended master classes held by Lukas Foss and Oliver Knussen. Shortly thereafter, he traveled to Jerusalem, Israel to study composition and counterpoint with Russian-born composer Mark Kopytman. While at the Rubin Academy, Crumb composed what he now considers to be his first mature work: Joyce Songs for mezzo-soprano, flute, clarinet, and cello (1989). Upon returning, Crumb received his first major commission from the Chicago Civic Orchestra (with support from the ASCAP Foundation). The resulting work, Clarino, was premiered in Chicago’s Symphony Hall June 1991. Clarino served as Crumb’s dissertation, for which he was awarded a Ph.D. in 1992.

Over the years, Crumb’s music has been widely performed throughout the United States and abroad. His orchestral works have been performed by the Baltimore Symphony, the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, and the Chicago Civic Orchestra; his chamber works by the Parnassus Ensemble, Voices of Change, The Chicago Ensemble, Network for New Music, and Quattro Mani. A recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship, he has received commissions from the Fromm and Barlow Foundations, the Los Angeles Symphony New Music Group, the National Association of Wind and Percussion Instructors, and the Bowdoin International New Music Festival. He has held residencies at the Yaddo and MacDowell artist colonies and participated in numerous festivals including La Biennale di Venezia, Cincinnati Conservatory’s “Music 2005,” Colorado College’s New Music Festival, and Bowling Green State University’s 21st New Music & Art Festival. Crumb has served as composer-in-residence at the Oregon Bach Festival Composers Symposium, and as featured guest composer at Washington State University’s “Festival of Contemporary Art Music.”

Crumb’s music has recently become available on compact disc recordings. In 2000, Variations for Cello and Chamber Ensemble, performed by cellist Ulrich Boeckheler and the Orchestra 2001, was released on the C.R.I. label. Two recent compositions for two pianos, Harmonia Mundi and The Whisperer, performed by Quattro Mani (Susan Grace and Alice Rybak), are available on the Innova label. His Awakening for trumpet and percussion has been released on Equilibrium.

Crumb joined the music faculty at the University of Oregon in 1997, where he continues to serve as an Associate Professor of Composition and Theory.

Source: http://www.uoregon.edu/~drcrumb/fullbiography.html