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**MSM JAZZ
ORCHESTRA**

*Honoring
Composers of
The Now*

Chris Zuar (MM '13), Director

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024 | 7:30 PM
NEIDORFF-KARPATI HALL



Council on the Arts

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024 | 7:30 PM
NEIDORFF-KARPATI HALL

MSM JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Honoring Composers of The Now

Chris Zuar (MM '13), Director

PROGRAM

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Marty Scott | <i>¡Salsalito!</i> |
| Jonah Barnett | <i>Phantasm</i> |
| Aдриanna Viera | <i>Stomach Ache</i> |
| Nathan Palmer | <i>Delore Le Fleur</i> |
| Tal Kalman | <i>Respiration</i> |
| <i>Intermission</i> | |
| Chris Bauer | <i>Dust of Xenon</i> |
| Tyler Bassett | <i>You Made A Poet</i> |
| William Tucker | <i>Via Kerouac</i> |
| Scott Robert | <i>The Dance</i> |

MSM JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Chris Zuar, Director

WOODWINDS

Guðjón Skúlason,

alto saxophone

Reykjanesbær, Iceland

Matt Stark,

alto saxophone

Walnut Creek, California

Tal Kalman,

tenor saxophone

Stockton, California

Jordan Leftridge,

tenor saxophone

Valles Mines, Missouri

Davide Sgarra,

baritone saxophone

Verona, Italy

BRASS

Grace Fox, trumpet

Cherry Hill, New Jersey

Kellin Hanas, trumpet

Wheaton, Illinois

Daphnis Moglia,

trumpet

Paris, France

Jonah Hieb, trumpet

Seattle, Washington

Geoffrey Nelson,

trumpet

San Mateo, California

Theodore Stone,

trombone

Houston, Texas

Bruno Tzinas,

trombone

Miami, Florida

William Tucker,

trombone

Larchmont, New York

Chase Bautista, bass

trombone

San Jose, California

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vibraphone

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London, United Kingdom

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piano

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Nanjing, China

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drums

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VOCALS

Motswedi Modiba

Pretoria, South Africa

Tyler Bassett

Tualatin, Oregon

PROGRAM NOTES

¡Salsalito!

Marty Scott

As a Jazz Musician I get inspired to write original music based on my everyday life, experiences, and things around me. At one point I used to work in the deli department of a grocery store back home in between breaks from school and I would sometimes think of writing tunes influenced by the names of cold cut products, one of being “Bold Salsalito Turkey.” I thought it would be a missed opportunity to not write an original composition called *Salsalito* and make it a salsa tune. I have always been heavily inspired by Latin Jazz since I was 18 when I first began studying jazz, so this was fun project for me to create, first being a small group tune and now a big band composition that features the montuno pattern, tumbao rhythms and classic idioms used in Afro Cuban music that are played by the horns throughout the piece.

Phantasm

Jonah Barnett

Phantasm is a tune I originally wrote in 2022 for my quartet, that I’ve since expanded to jazz big band. This piece was inspired by trying to blend the sound of Charles Mingus with the Joe Henderson record *So Near So Far*, and to evoke a sense of uncertainty and eeriness, like when your eyes play tricks on you. In my big band adaptation, I tried to lean into the horror movie/creepy aspect, and featured tenor saxophone and guitar to pay homage to the original.

Stomach Ache

Adrianna Viera

While writing this tune, I was notified that a friend of mine had become sick with a stomach bug. The characteristics of this song in front of me was eerily reminiscent of the aches and pains one endures with a severe stomach bug, and I thought back to whenever I was sick. My stomach would twist and turn, causing me to squirm with discomfort. I soon recalled and connected this unsettling and often startling experience with the reaction to hearing something utterly eccentric and funky. The music takes over the body like a parasite, and one starts to hunch over, bop, shake and make faces with abandon. It’s the physical, infectious response we cannot seem to shake when the rhythm in our bodies feverishly takes control.

Delor Le Fleur **Nathan Palmer**

Delor Le Fleur is a musical expression of profound emotions of love and connection. Inspired by personal experiences, this composition endeavors to encapsulate the depth and intensity of intimate human relationships through the medium of music.

Throughout the piece, listeners are invited on a journey through various emotional landscapes, mirroring the highs and lows, the tenderness and passion inherent in loving relationships. From moments of serene tranquility to surges of ecstatic joy, *Delor Le Fleur* attempts to traverse the spectrum of human emotions with sensitivity and authenticity.

The piece was written as a heartfelt tribute to the power of love and the profound connections that enrich our lives. *Delor Le Fleur* stands out as a testament to the enduring capacity of music to capture the ineffable essence of our deepest emotions, inviting listeners to immerse themselves in a world of love, passion, and beauty.

Dust of Xenon **Chris Bauer**

This is the first movement in a collection of works that I am tentatively calling “*The Exodus Suite*.” Set in August 2023, the suite as a whole depicts the story of my journey: from the middle of Texas all the way (by massive Penske truck) to New York City. *Dust of Xenon* takes it from the beginning, the first morning of the journey. “Hopeful determination” is what I hope comes across in the beginning, it’s what I was feeling. Finally getting on the road, and never looking back, can be felt in the double-time exposition. As you know, it is an immense task to put these feelings into words. So I’ll try with music.

The single-time feel is inspired by Kurt Rosenwinkel’s *Use of Light*. The title is loosely based on an anagram of the words “Exodus Denton.”

You Made A Poet **Tyler Bassett**

We shouldn’t need to summon Eros, son of Aphrodite, from the heavens to shoot our lover in the bum just to express the magnitude of our love. For me, saying “I love you like I love bread and fondue” conveys my feelings as profoundly as any sort of statement involving a Greek God. *You Made A Poet* speaks from the perspective of someone who isn’t a “self-proclaimed poet of love,” but rather, someone who struggles to articulate their emotions. However, when they find the

right person, the words flow naturally, as if guided by Eros himself. Ultimately, whether it's shooting an arrow in their bum or likening them to bread and fondue, there's no one correct way to say, "I love you."

Via Kerouac **Will Tucker**

The title refers to the American writer Jack Kerouac (1922–1969), pioneer and namer of the Beat Generation. Kerouac was heavily influenced by jazz—he starts his long-form poem *Mexico City Blues* with the line, "I want to be considered a jazz poet," which fits given his stream-of-consciousness style of writing. My composition was not inspired by a specific moment in a Kerouac work, as recreating something, looking back at it over and over, would disobey his philosophy. This work is more the result of an attempt to bottle up Kerouac's energy inside of me while using his *Belief and Technique for Modern Prose* as a loose framework for how I approached composing this chart, hence the title *Via Kerouac. Belief and Technique* can be summed up in its fifth bullet point of thirty, "something that you feel will find its own form". I didn't think about any specific structure or what would happen down the road in my composition ahead of time, I just wrote, being towed as blindly as possible by the momentum and spirit of the music.

The Dance **Scott Robert**

When the world ends,
I will be in a red dress.
When the world ends,
I will be in a smoky bar
 on Friday night.
When the world ends,
I will be a thought-cloud.
When the world ends,
I will be steam in a tea kettle.
When the world ends,
I will be a sunbeam through
 a lead window,
And I will shake like the
 semis on the interstate,
And I will shake like the tree
 kissed by lightning.
And I will move; the earth will move
 too,

And I will move; the cities will move
too,
And I will move, with the remains of
my last paycheck in my pocket.
It will be a Friday night
And I will be in a red dress,
My feet relieved of duty,
My body in free-fall,
Loose as a ballerina
in zero gravity,
Equal at last with feathers
and dust,
As the world faints and tumbles
down the stairs,
The jukebox is overtaken at last,
And the cicadas, under the eaves,
warm up their legs.”

– *Text by Cornelius Eady, 1985*

Do you fear the end of the world?

It’s ok if you do. It’s a perfectly natural reaction. In such turbulent times as these, it’s easy to look a few years—months—weeks—days—minutes(?) into the future and see the apocalypse. It feels biblical. Overwhelming. A catastrophic event of epic proportions. And yet, in the hands of acclaimed poet and advocate Cornelius Eady, the end of the world seems almost mundane.

Eady paints a surprisingly ambivalent picture of the apocalypse. The literal last days are upon us, and yet we follow a typical person’s Friday, going through the motions and celebrating the freedom offered by the week’s end. The Earth and human civilization are to be upended, and yet even the smallest life forms are ready to carry on after the world’s demise. The world exists in a cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.

Perhaps the world ends somewhere downtown in a smoky bar every Friday night. Perhaps the world ends every few steps we take, every few bars of music we play. Perhaps we face catastrophe and the world ends every few minutes, yet we all keep dancing.

Perhaps, by confronting the apocalypse, and daring to continue the Dance anyway, we breathe new life into a dying world.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Chris Zuar (MM '13)

Christopher Zuar's compositions and arrangements have been performed both nationally and internationally by the WDR Big Band, Danish Radio Big Band, and the Brussels Jazz Orchestra.

On May 10, 2024, Zuar will release *Exuberance*, his second full-length studio album. The 60-minute song cycle consists of seven interwoven compositions performed by the Christopher Zuar Orchestra and featured guest soloists. The album was conceived in collaboration with animation filmmaker Anne Beal whose hand-painted animations accompany the music. Jazz piano legend Fred Hersch describes *Exuberance* as "... a mature statement by a great composer in his prime, performed by a stellar ensemble with passion and care."

Zuar has garnered numerous awards and commissions. He is the recipient of the 2021 Symphonic Jazz Orchestra Commissioning Prize, the 2020 Copland House Residency Award, the 2020 Airmen of Note Sammy Nestico Award, the 2020 SCI Jazz Composition Award, the 2016 ASCAP Foundation Johnny Mandel Prize, the 2015 First Music Commission from the New York Youth Symphony, and is the five-time recipient of the ASCAP Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composer's Award. Zuar is a two-time MacDowell fellow and 2018 Yaddo guest.

Zuar holds a Bachelor's degree from the New England Conservatory of Music and a Master's degree from the Manhattan School of Music, both in jazz composition. His debut album, *Musings*, a collection of seven original compositions for large ensemble, was released on Sunnyside Records in 2016. The record has received broad critical acclaim, including a spot on *DownBeat* magazine's Best Albums of 2016 and runner-up Debut of the Year in the *NPR* Jazz Critics Poll.

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The Centennial Project was an ambitious program of improvements to the School's architecturally distinguished campus coinciding with MSM's 100th anniversary. The centerpiece of the Project was the renovation of Neidorff-Karpati Hall, which has been transformed into a state-of-the-art venue to showcase our talented students. The Project also included a dramatic and welcoming new campus entrance on Claremont Avenue, new practice rooms, and an expansion of the main entryway and lobby.

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