Manhattan School of Music

MSM Composers' Concert

Reiko Füting (DMA '00), Coordinator

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2026 | 7:30 PM
ALAN M. AND JOAN TAUB ADES PERFORMANCE SPACE

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PROGRAM

CAMERON HAGAMAN

An Instrumentalist's Meditation on the Chambers Hum (2026)

Zhongyang Ling, soprano saxophone

MARK KIM-MULGREW

Collatz 9 (2026)

Mihail Babus, percussion
Emma Stewart, percussion

YINGSHU WANG
POEMS BY YINGSHU WANG

Every Turn Unfolding (2026)

Yingshu Wang, Narrator
Xianyi Yang, piano
Jingyi Huang, violin 1
Honghan Lu, violin 2

EALAPH TABBAA

نسر (Nasr) (2026)

Sydney Scarlett, violin
Sathvi Seshan, violin
Miles Wierer-Huling, viola
Eli Jort, violoncello

Intermission

SARAH SENIOR

Anticipando (2026)

Zhongyang Ling, baritone saxophone
Sarah Senior, electronics

DAN-YING HUANG

Avalanche (2026)

Ethan Burke, clarinet
Noah Hertzman, cello
Emma Stewart, percussion

LAURA NOBILI

In Your Footsteps (2026)

Duke Baur, tenor saxophone (soloist)
Michael Tkachenko, alto saxophone
Zhongyang Ling, alto saxophone
Chloe Madrak, tenor saxophone
Jenna Marx, baritone saxophone
Cameron Shave, trumpet
William Xu, trumpet
Willson Hooks, trumpet
Dorian Wylde, trumpet
Will Tucker, trombone
Thomas Leenhouts, trombone
William Kao, trombone
Ryan Parichuk, trombone
Ethan Dymit, guitar
Alex Sinn, piano
Marcus Torzillo, bass
Benjamin Sachar, drums
Laura Nobili, Conductor

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Every Turn Unfolding (2026)
Yingshu Wang

The soul is an arrow never released;
the bowstring remains taut
What matters is that the arc always points towards the distance.
From the moment of existence, the act of leaving has already begun.

Birth is a rolling marble;
once it starts moving forward,
it can never return to its initial stillness.

Consciousness is a transparent bottle;
something within it slowly rises,
until it catch a glimpse of itself.

In the beginning, the world could be taken into my mouth;
For the first time my life believed, I could be held by the world.

Curiosity is a paper airplane;
imagination reaches the distance long before reality does.

Adolescence is a piece of chalk,
leaving clear marks upon the darkness;
every stroke is an attempt to explain the world and oneself.

Contemplation is an arrow loosed from the bow;
its path may curve and fold,
its direction never changes
the arc of the bow still remains the same.

Only later we understand that some things must be polished again and again,
until the moment comes,
when what you see in your eyes is no longer the world,
but the person who is looking at it.

PROGRAM NOTES

An Instrumentalist's Meditation on the Chambers Hum (2026)

Cameron Hagaman

'An Instrumentalist's Meditation on the Chambers Hum' is a collection of works that serves as a case study for a broader research project of mine which explores the relationship between environmental sounds and the musical material generated as a result. The *'Chambers Hum'* is an art installation located in the Chamber Street subway station here in New York city, produced by WPZSCH (Emmett Palaima, Nathan Sherman) in collaboration with the MTA Vacant Unit Activation Program. The installation uses arriving subway cars as a root note for its tonality, producing a sustained vibration at 224hZ. This saxophone piece, in turn, draws upon the drone produced by the art installation, as well as the most common frequencies of the subway braking systems, as the foundation for its musical material. As a result, the composition centers on four pitches (including quarter sharps and sharps), exploring the widest possible range of variations for each through techniques such as harmonics, overtones, subtones, multiphonics, and alternate fingerings. The first piece in the project, which is the one presented on this concert, serves as an exploration of these pitches and a foundation for the following works in the collection. This performance is a sneak peek of the site-specific version, which will be played directly within the Chamber Street station later this month, alongside the art installation, and will incorporate the movement of train traffic as a determining factor in the timing, form, and overall organization of the musical material.

Collatz 9 (2026)

Mark Kim-Mulgrew

Collatz 9, written for Mihail Babus and Emma Stewart, is my first foray into *process-based composition*, which involves defining a set of rules (a *process*) that generates a piece of music from an initial fragment and, by and large, accepting the confines of the generated result. Such a process could be so specific that anyone who invokes it ends up generating the same piece of music (the so-called *algorithmic composition*) or allow for enough flexibility that no two people following the process will write the same piece of music (e.g., the fugue, taken as a process of generating monothematic contrapuntal compositions).

It would be interesting, I though, to work with processes arising from simple generative rules that inherently create complex, unpredictable patterns. I also found myself preferring processes that allow for additional input on my part (*artistic freedom*, as it were), where a small change in input could potentially result in a drastically

different output. Without this, I risk being able to picture the entire composition before I have a chance to live with the process: at that point, why bother?

Because I am not clever, I started my exploration with the *Collatz conjecture*, the most famous example of a simple mathematical rule creating such horrific complexity that a full understanding of how the generative process unfolds still eludes us. The *Collatz process* takes a number as an input: if it is odd, then we multiply it by 3 and add 1; if it is even, then we divide it by 2. Repeating the process gives us a *Collatz sequence*, e.g.,

9 - 28 - 14 - 7 - 22 - 11 - 34 - 17 - 52 - 26 - 13 - 40 - 20 - 10 - 5 - 16 - 8 - 4 - 2 - 1.

While it is certainly possible to compute the Collatz sequence starting at a specific number, it is currently unknown whether the Collatz sequence always reaches 1. This is because a small change in the starting number often completely changes how the resulting Collatz sequence looks like. In other words, there is no easy way to *picture the entire composition* despite the apparent simplicity of the generative rules.

To apply this idea, I freely composed a few measures and transformed it as follows: if I have an odd number of measures, I repeat the material 3 times and add one measure of new material; if I have an even number of measures, I keep only half of it and toss the rest. To make the repeats more interesting, I decided to separate the two percussion parts at a canon, with the canonic distance following the Collatz sequence generated by the number of measures of the initial material. I then combined the resulting two-part canon into one part to serve as the basis for the next canon, thus setting up a repeatable process.

How I combine the canonic segments after an odd-number step, which half to keep at the even-number step, and what single-measure additions I prove after an even-number step were left up to me. I also added dynamic and tempo changes at will. Whenever I made edits to the piece beyond the first draft, I re-did the entire generative process to propagate the effects of the changes throughout the piece.

I chose to start with 9 measures of freely-composed material, because the Collatz sequence starting at 9 goes through a long enough journey of numbers growing and shrinking while keeping the total sum — which determines the total number of measures in the resulting piece — at a reasonable size. Though unrelated to the process itself, I used number nine and the notion of *three times the same thing and then add a different bit* at various places for fun.

Every Turn Unfolding (2026)
Yingshu Wang

Every Turn Unfolding is a piece composed for piano, two violins, and narration. It is an auditory journey exploring the emergence of consciousness. *Every Turn Unfolding* is neither a closed, definitive end nor a simple regression to a

starting point. It points to an ongoing cognitive process: through experience and transformation, things once familiar take on new meanings, and our relationships with ourselves and the world are fundamentally altered. This is not an undoing of movement, but rather a moment in which consciousness, having traversed that movement, comes to a new recognition of its own origins.

نسر *(Nasr)* (2026)

Ealaph Tabbaa

The title of the piece, *Nasr*, is the Arabic word for "vulture." This piece has no programmatic elements, nor does it seek to portray its namesake bird. When I was in the process of writing this piece, I had an experience where I saw a group of Turkey Vultures eating a carcass on the side of the highway. After getting over my initial shock of the grisly image, I was quite moved by the birds, seeing them as nature's caretakers that cleanse the ecosystem.

Avalanche (2026)

Dan-Ying Huang

This piece centers on three voices drawn toward one another, embodied by the clarinet, cello, and percussion. Beginning with their own monologues, they gradually move through moments of hesitation, approach, and intertwining, forming a delicate, unstable balance between closeness and distance. Like an avalanche in nature, however, change has already begun beneath an apparently calm surface. A sudden, unexpected withdrawal collapses this fragile balance, leaving only emptiness and silence. After the avalanche, everything eventually returns to stillness, yet it can never be quite as it was before.

Some endings may seem to come without warning, but the collapse has already begun within the silence.

In Your Footsteps (2026)

Laura Nobili

In Your Footsteps is dedicated to my grandparents, Ellie & Herschel Sobel and Emilia & Lorenzo Nobili. I am so grateful for their endless support and faith in me, the memories I've shared with them, and for the ways they have shaped me as a person throughout my life. My Nonna, Emilia Nobili, has tremendous pride in her Italian culture and has passed down many of her traditions to me, such as making homemade pasta and tomato sauce. Since she's a phenomenal seamstress, when I was starting Grade 1, my Nonna made me some pencil cases, which I've carried with

me throughout my education. She also made dresses for my dolls and helped me numerous times by hemming my clothes, which I appreciate so deeply. My Nonna is also incredibly candid. I find myself emulating her by staying true to myself and not being afraid to speak freely about my beliefs. My Nonno, Lorenzo Nobili, has shown me the value of perfectionism and the importance of precision and devotion to one's work. He works meticulously on his garden and home-repair projects, always achieving extraordinary results. I try to bring his level of dedication and accuracy to everything I do. My Grandpa, Herschel Sobel, is exceptionally thoughtful and selfless, and cares deeply about our family. Every time I tell him a detail about my life, he follows up the next time I see him. As a kid, I have many fond memories of spending quality time with Grandpa, such as riding our inflatable boat at the beach, going fishing, visiting farms and parks, playing in the snow, and our signature Karaoke "Rock Around the Clock". From him, I've learned how special it feels to have someone genuinely care about my hobbies and interests, even if they are vastly different from his own, and I make an effort to approach all my relationships with the same degree of sincere attention. My Grandma, Ellie Sobel, is one of the most generous people I know. She is constantly thinking of others and pours her heart and soul into making someone feel loved. When I was born, she wrote a collection of short stories for me, my favorite being "Laura's Rainbow," and that was just the start of her endless generosity towards me. Grandma always has my back and has stood up for me when I couldn't stand up for myself – every time she hears I'm feeling down, she messages me to check in and is always cheering me on. From her, I've learned how to put my heart and soul into loving someone and finding ways to make them feel special. I'd like to dedicate this piece to all four of my grandparents. Thank you for supporting me through the highs and lows, thank you for sharing so many memories with me, and thank you for setting such a strong example for me. I hope to be able to follow in your footsteps.