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College of Music

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Photo credit: Owen Zhou.

SoundWorks

Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

ATLAS B2 Center for Media, Arts and Performance

PROGRAM

Daddy, won't you stay (9')

Addison Hill

Addison Hill, solo voice, music box and electronics

Xuan, visual media

Grass Stains (8')

Asher Dobrin

Asher Dobrin, electric bass

Aria Henson flute

Xuan, visual media

Chromatic Abyss (10')

Nicholas Felder

Nicholas Felder, voice and electronics

Xuan, visual media

Midwest Sketches (9')

Leah Porter Tracy, 2025 SPARK Award Winner

I. dawn, over fields

II. midmorning, beside the stream

III. afternoon, sheltered

IV. dusk, in the woods

Xuan, visual media

Matthew Cox and Teddy King, piano

Intermission

64-Bit Electronic Composition Competition Finalists

Thorofare Freeroam (8')

Alan Mackwell

Alan Mackwell, fujara and electronics

To Walk in Bloom (8')

Joshua Carter Maynard, 2025 SPARK Award Winner

64-Bit Electronic Composition Competition Winners

PROGRAM NOTES

Grass Stains (9')

Asher Dobrin

Stained knees tell a story of experience. A child with stained, bruised and bloodied knees has been through the mud and experienced the world. They took a path from point A to point B rather than just arriving. *Grass Stains* dives into the feeling of an elusive past, reaching for memories of this path that stained our knees and the stains we wiped away.

Chromatic Abyss (10')

Nicholas Felder

Growing up Black and queer, I experienced a lifetime of censoring myself. Not allowing myself to live into certain parts of my being, out of survival. Only recently have I gradually started to unlearn some of those socializations and thoughts. I took this composition as an opportunity to imagine what it would be like if I were to just strip away all the censoring and constraints. I asked myself and now ask the listeners: What would it be like if, in this moment, you could show up as your most natural self? What would that feel like? To the listeners, I encourage you to give yourself permission to explore and then own it.

Midwest Sketches (9')

Leah Porter Tracy, 2025 SPARK Award Winner

Midwest Sketches features four short movements, each a “snapshot” of growing up in rural Ohio and was written for a student and teacher duo. The piece aims to explore memory and safety, as well as our changing relationship with the outdoors as we get older.

Thorofare Freeroam (8')

Alan Mackwell

Inspired by the 2016 video game *Firewatch*, *Thorofare Freeroam* explores the themes and images surrounding the game's epilogue game mode; encountering along the way the consequences of escapism, idealization of natural spaces, and the complex relationship between video game players and digital landscapes

To Walk in Bloom (8')

Joshua Carter Maynard, 2025 SPARK Award Winner

To Walk in Bloom is an immersive collaboration between composer Joshua Carter Maynard and impressionist photographer Mai Naito. Born in Osaka, Japan, and now based in Brisbane, Australia, Naito captures the beauty of landscapes through her innovative photo-layering techniques—a process she believes encapsulates the memories of our experiences surrounded by nature. This editing style produces what many describe as oil-painting-like artwork, rich in intricacy and depth. Inspired by her work, Maynard initiated a collaborative sonic and visual exhibit to recreate, in music, the awe evoked by this artwork. Working with Naito to establish a soundscape suitable for accompanying these photographs, he utilized both synthesized and recorded instruments—from steel drums to duduk—to paint a patient, reflective, and immersive auditory experience. Both the music and the artwork share delicate attention to detail—the closer you listen, and the closer you look, the more the wonder of this natural world begins to emerge.

PERSONNEL

Egemen Kesikli, director

Annika Socolofsky, faculty coach

Nicholas Felder, community outreach coordinator

Luka Vezmar, stage manager

Addison Hill, social media coordinator

ATLAS B2 Center for Media, Arts and Performance

Chris Petillo, audio engineer and production manager

Brad Gallagher, technical and production specialist

Sean Winters, B2 scholar in residence, lecturer in Critical Media Practices

Asher Dobrin

Asher Dobrin (b. 2004) is a composer from Gainesville, Florida. He is currently pursuing a bachelor's in music composition at the University of Colorado Boulder. Before moving to Boulder, he worked as an independent composer and performer in the Gainesville and Denver areas. Dobrin's compositions are primarily inspired by nature and American folk culture. He has written works for chamber ensemble, film score, orchestra, concert band and electronics.

Nicholas Felder

Having a passion for community engagement and working with youth, Nicholas Felder (he/him) is a Black queer artist, composer-vocalist, activist, and educator who creates art that inspires relational bonds between people in a given space. He builds community in artmaking, unlocking truths around self-identity,

and creating a space for embodied expression. Felder has led arts programs and workshops with numerous organizations, such as El Sistema Colorado, Neutral Zone (Ann Arbor, Michigan), the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and American Composers Orchestra. He loves to encourage teens to express their social and political views through artmaking. Felder has earned degrees from the University of Michigan and Kennesaw State University and is earning his Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) in music composition at the University of Colorado Boulder. nicholasfelder.com

Addison Hill

Addison Hill is an artist, composer, multi-instrumentalist and educator from Phoenix, Arizona. Her work collages together different mediums, stories and sonic possibilities to create experiences that strive for emotional liberation and connection. When composing, Hill steps into the role of a director to holistically consider the relationship between sound and space, allowing for a more visceral experience inspired by the imaginary worlds Hill lives in. She received a Bachelor of Music in music composition from Arizona State University and is pursuing a master's in music composition with music technology emphasis from the University of Colorado Boulder, where she teaches Intro to Music Technology.

Hill's works have been performed at the Gammage Auditorium, PRISMS festival, Wildflower Composer's Festival, Arizona Women's Collaboration Concert, soundSCAPE, Sō Summer Institute, Superbloom Drone Festival and National Sawdust. Addison spends her free time yapping, napping, yearning and learning, while providing love and support to her needy cat (which is definitely a full time job).

Alan Mackwell

Described as “an original composer with new ideas and a command of complex symphonic writing” (BroadStreet Journal), New Zealand American Alan Mackwell is a two-time BMI award-winning composer and performer based in Boulder. In his work, Mackwell seeks to explore atmospheres inspired by his experiences in the Permian Basin, northern New Mexico and Appalachian North Carolina using a highly resonant and bluegrass-infused musical language.

Joshua Carter Maynard

Joshua Carter Maynard is a composer and conductor from Colorado Springs, who specializes in bringing passion for choral and chamber music to a new generation of musicians. He holds a Bachelor of Music in music composition from the University of Boulder Colorado, along with certifications in music theory and music technology. Currently completing a master’s in choral conducting at the University of Oregon, Maynard draws his artistic inspiration from human stories and the natural world.

In addition to producing many awarded compositions for mediums like choir and orchestra to electronics and jazz combos, Maynard served as a president and founder of the Renova New Music Ensemble, CU Boulder’s premier contemporary choral group. Prioritizing collaboration and musician ownership in all his projects, Maynard has conducted and had pieces performed by groups such as the Colorado Springs Philharmonic, the Choral Arts Initiative, Nois Saxophone Quartet, Colorado Vocal Arts Ensemble, the University of Wyoming Bel Canto Choir, the CU Boulder Chamber Singers, Lirios String Quartet, the Denver Playground Ensemble, the Eklund Opera and more.

As well as his roles as a composer, conductor and vocalist, Maynard has experience as a producer and recording technician, an audio editor and mixing engineer, a private lesson instructor, a musical theater performer and an ensemble administrator. He firmly believes that student-led enthusiasm begets musical excellence, and musical excellence inspires personal discovery.

Mai Naito

Mai Naito is an impressionist photographer born in Osaka, Japan, and currently based in Brisbane, Australia. Her work explores memory, emotion, and the natural world, drawing from childhood experiences of wandering through natural spaces as spaces of imagination and reflection. Rather than documenting places, Naito photographs how a moment feels, layering fragments of light, movement and time into a single image.

She holds a Bachelor of Visual Arts from Queensland College of Art and Design. Her work has been exhibited within Australia and internationally, and is permanently displayed in several hospitals around Queensland, where it has been selected for its calming and therapeutic impact. Through collaborations across music, public spaces and publications, Naito's practice invites viewers to slow down, wander, and reconnect with memory and the natural world.

Leah Porter Tracy

Leah Porter Tracy (she/they) (b. 1999) is a composer and vocalist currently pursuing a Master of Music in music composition at University of Colorado Boulder, where she studies with Annika Socolofsky and Carter Pann. Tracy draws inspiration from the people and places around her, basing her compositions on current

events, childhood recollections, vibrant stories, and nature. She has a particular interest in introducing beginner or intermediate singers to contemporary techniques and often writes with a wide range of ability levels in mind. Tracy was a 2023 Composer Fellow for the Choral Arts Initiative PREMIERE|Project Festival and the 2025 Ablaze Composer Lab Emerging Composer with the Ember Choral Arts. Her choral music has been chosen for honors such as the San Francisco Choral Artists New Voices Project and the Chicago A Cappella HerVoice Competition, and her works have been performed by ensembles including Grammy Award-winning Kansas City Chorale, and by church, school, college and community choirs throughout the United States. Tracy is also an active performer, singing soprano with the Denver-based choir Kantorei. She earned a Bachelor of Music in composition from Bowling Green State University in 2021, where she studied with Elaine Lillios.

Xuan

Xuan is a new media artist, filmmaker and pianist working at the intersection of music, visual art, and technology. A trained classical pianist with a passion for visual music, she actively develops innovative, cross-disciplinary projects that broaden the scope of music and performance. Driven by themes such as femininity, power, alienation and multicultural identity, her work encompasses abstract scenography, experimental animation, music videos, narrative documentaries, interactive installations and large scale projection mapping.

She has collaborated with Glenn Kotche, Pierre Jodlowski, Nina Shekhar, Annika Socolofsky, Ben Wendel, Alexi Kenney, Bec Plexus, Eunbi Kim and GRAMMY® Award-winning ensembles

Eighth Blackbird, Third Coast Percussion and Akropolis Reed Quintet among others—which have led to performances at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the Smithsonian Museum of Art, Constellation, SFJAZZ, Le Poisson Rouge, Zürich Design Biennale 2019, Ad Astra Music Festival 2020, Sound Forms Hong Kong 2021, the Mizzou International Composers Festival 2021, CAP UCLA’s Tune In Festival 2021 and the MATA Festival x Found Sound Nation 2023.

In recent seasons, her close partnership with composers and performers have produced feature-length multimedia concerts including *High Heart* in 2023 with GRAMMY-nominated jazz saxophonist Ben Wendel which premiered at the Logan Center for the Arts in Chicago, *it feels like a dream* in 2022 with pianist Eunbi Kim at the Baryshnikov Art Center (BAC) in New York, *Ex Machina* in 2023-25 with pianist Clara Yang at the Process Series at UNC Chapel Hill, and *Shifting Ground* in 2024 with violinist Alexi Kenney at BAC and the 2024 The Ojai Music Festival.

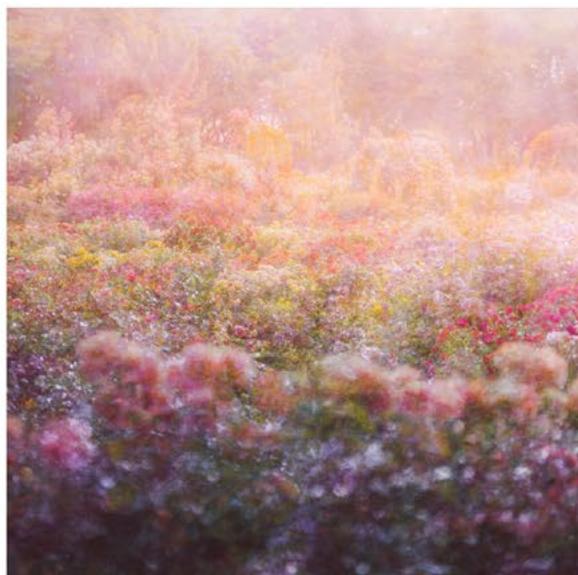
Of the belief that art is for everyone, Xuan’s evolving practice explores collective experiences through art in public spaces. In 2021, she was invited by Art on the MART to create projections in collaboration with Eighth Blackbird and composer Michael Gordon for the 2.5-acre façade of the Merchandise Mart, the largest permanent digital installation in the world. Each night from July to September, *The Light of the Dark* lit up the riverwalk to the delight of thousands of locals and tourists alike, including those passing by on kayaks, bikes or catching a glimpse from the “L” train.

A passionate educator, she has held workshops at The New School and given lectures at Carnegie Mellon University, CU Boulder, USC, Rochester Institute of Technology, ASU, ESM, and OSU.

Xuan is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music under the tutelage of Nelita True, and has studied Media Spaces at the BTK University of Art and Design in Berlin. She is honored to be a fellow of OneBeat 9 and the Blackbird Creative Lab 2018.

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*Photos: On this page, University Chorus, Fall 2024.
Photo credit: Erika O'Connor; On the cover, Cross-Genre Ensemble, 2025. Photo credit: Owen Zhou.*

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*The Drowsy Chaperone (2023).
Photo credit: Bennet Forsyth.*

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