

# CU★PRESENTS

2022-23 Season



College of Music

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER



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the home of performing  
arts at the University of  
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The mission of the  
**University of Colorado  
Boulder College of Music**  
is to inspire artistry and  
discovery, together.



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# CU Boulder SoundWorks

## Garden Odysseys

Egemen Kesikli, artistic director

Annika Socolofsky, faculty coach

7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2023

Grusin Music Hall

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## Program

### **seeds to plant (in an unmarked grave) (11:00)**

Rain Michael

Mary Letera, visual art

*Ilan Blanck, Indigo Farmer, Ryan Flat, Madeline Guyer, Abby Kellems,  
Jessie Lausé, Milo Lewon, Holly McMahon, James Morris, Keenan Powell,  
Kaori Quan and Emily Zalevsky, keyboards*

### **A Kind of Quiet Contentment (4:00)**

Ilan Blanck

*Ilan Blanck, classical guitar*

### **Spirit Flight (6:00)**

Katherine Hoover

*Laurie Sampsel, flute*

### **Contradictions (7:00)**

Holly McMahon

*Holly McMahon and Julia Warnock, body percussion*

**—Intermission—**

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## **Voyages and Homecomings (12:00)**

John Clay Allen

1. Where the Rain Begins
2. Let Us Go Each Into the Valley
3. Sometimes the Island Wavers

*Logan Banister and Josh Vance, soprano saxophone*

*Carter DeSouza, Erick Miranda and Vivian Lassiter, alto saxophone*

*Jack Merrill and Anthony Petrocco, tenor saxophone*

*Ethan Mead and Will Foster, baritone saxophone*

## **Three Fantasias (10:00)**

Cesar Perodo

- I. Detmold
- II. Sicuris

*Julia Sills, flute*

## **Burgundy Gardens (3:00)**

Ryan Flat

*Ryan Flat, piano*

## **Azure Skies (3:00)**

Josh Maynard

*Renova New Music Choir*

*Jessie Flasschoen, conductor*

# Program notes

## **seeds to plant (in an unmarked grave) (11:00)**

*Rain Michael*

*Mary Letera, visual art*

This piece is for as many keyboard(ist)s as possible.

## **A Kind of Quiet Contentment (4:00)**

*Ilan Blanck*

I wrote *A Kind of Quiet Contentment* by request of and as a small gift for my longtime childhood guitar teacher, Ray Mueller. An exceedingly singular man (who has not owned a car since the 1970's and has never owned a computer), I learned so much from him about music and life. I will always be grateful for the things he taught me.

## **Spirit Flight (6:00)**

*Katherine Hoover*

After creating this title with a connection to Native American sounds and wooden flutes, composer Katherine Hoover played it for two friends while searching for a name for the composition. One, who is Lakota, described vivid images of varied landscapes as if flying, and the other said *Spirit Flight*, a title that flashed through the composer's mind as well.

—*From publisher's notes*

## **Contradictions (7:00)**

*Holly McMahon*

Part I of *Contradictions* was based on the concept of meditation. In the beginning, I wanted to mimic birds calling to each other, with three distinct calls and responses. I then let the calls become sparser as the meditator's attention turns inward, to their breath, which is represented by rubbing sounds which slowly alternate between relatively lower and higher pitches. The movement ends with a representation of a heartbeat, split between two performers to give the sound more dimension.

I wanted Part II to begin with a dramatic change in energy. There are four main rhythmic themes in the movement, which were inspired by stepping, and other genres of music which only utilize percussion. Additionally, I wanted to make the rhythmic motives as different from each other as possible to allow myself to clearly shift between and combine them. I aimed to dramatically evolve and alter the momentum of this movement several times to continuously build anticipation and excitement until it ended.

## **Voyages and Homecomings (12:00)**

*John Clay Allen*

*Voyages and Homecomings* is a set of short pieces for saxophone choir. The titles are lifted from poetry by Pablo Neruda, Kevin Young and Marie Howe, respectively. I was attracted to the lines based on the images they suggested, and during the writing of these pieces, imagery was simply enough. Of course, it is impossible, and ill-advised, to ignore the context from which these lines were extracted. The Young and Howe poems address grief and the complex feelings of those left behind in the wake of death, while the Neruda is a poignant portrait of his father and the life he lived before his death.

But these lines have been removed from those contexts and in their new arrangement new meanings arise. One can still read grief (and hear it in the music), but I see other meanings and narratives as well. Certainly, one can hardly evoke nature without the subtext of climate change coloring all meaning. However, the theme I always come back to when reading these lines is one of loneliness, self-doubt, and fear. In my own life, these emotions are cyclical. They alternate with periods of confidence and optimism. Still, when I listen to these pieces now, I prefer the images as they are, and like to imagine a world before the Anthropocene, or a far-off imagined place still untouched by our destructive hand.

## Three Fantasias (10:00)

*Cesar Peredo*

The first of Peredo's *Three Fantasias*, "Detmold" (named for the town in Germany where Peredo studied), begins with an expressive opening that features the pentatonic scale. The South American rhythms become evident in the second movement, "Sicuris," with ornamentations becoming increasingly developed as the piece goes on. A Sicuri is an Andean dance, traditionally played on pan pipes. The piece features strong, repetitive rhythmic patterns, which require a good sense of pulse and strong finger technique.

The second *Fantasia* begins with melodic material similar to the first but quickly develops into an expressive syncopated dance that increases in complexity as the piece develops. The demonstration recording published by Peredo includes a number of articulations and ornamentations not included in the printed score. This suggests that, as with other South American styles, the player is free to interpret the material in any way felt to be appropriate.

## Burgundy Gardens (3:00)

*Ryan Flat*

*Burgundy Gardens* is a piece for solo piano that depicts a peaceful walk through a garden of burgundy roses. The music aims to capture the tranquility of the garden and the elegant yet modest nature of the color burgundy.

## Azure Skies (3:00)

*Josh Maynard*

*Azure Skies* is an a cappella choral piece inspired by my love for my hometown of Colorado Springs, Colorado. Born and raised in this wonderful city, I have constantly been inspired by its incredible scenery, its hidden little places and its loving people. Colorado Springs sits at the base of the magnificent Pikes Peak—the mountain discovered by Zebulon Pike that inspired the poem "America the Beautiful." The land that poet Katharine Lee Bates described as she sat atop its summit lives up to its station as one of America's greatest treasures. In addition to honoring the brave sacrifice of the pilgrims who settled

there and the stoic courage of heros who defended our nation, she penned the memorable lines, “O beautiful for spacious skies, For amber waves of grain, For purple mountain majesties, Above the fruited plain!” Championing America’s natural beauty and our foundational values of liberty and freedom, she elegantly encapsulated the spirit of Colorado Springs and this great nation. Reading her impactful words, I thought of what makes Colorado Springs such a special place in my heart, from the awe-inspiring Garden of the Gods, to sunsets over humble ranches, to my relationship with the United States Air Force Academy. Her poem inspired me to write my own that commemorated my hometown and celebrated this amazing country. The text is as follows:

Azure skies give way  
To pastel hues of orange and blue  
Rope swings o’er quiet creeks and droning of planes,  
These golden foothills will ever be home sweet home,

The mountain air sweeps down from the pines,  
O’er homesteads where Clydesdales roam,  
Where winter brings snow that blankets the trees,  
These golden foothills will ever be home sweet home,

And Zebulon watches above the clouds,  
Where sandstone camels are dwarfed by his majesty,  
Where eagles of steell soar into the sky,  
The azure skies.



# Personnel

*Text that is bold and underlined is a hyperlink and can be clicked or tapped for more information.*

**Egemen Kesikli**, artistic director

**Annika Socolofsky**, faculty coach

## John Clay Allen

John Clay Allen is a composer and pianist. His work swings wildly between noisy soundscapes and lush neo-romantic symphonic works as he moves from one sonic obsession to the next. Though perpetually stimulated and motivated by digital tools and possibilities, Allen's work is most inspired by the natural world and rooted in human connection. His work has been performed around the United States and abroad, and his third commercial album will be released in late 2023. Allen resides in Denver, Colorado where he dreams of writing a sci-fi novel and is always in search of the best green chili stew recipe.

## Ilan Blanck

Ilan Blanck is a composer and guitarist currently based in Boulder. As a music maker, he has written and arranged for all kinds of projects, including flute choirs, love-sick singer songwriters, saxophone quartets, orchestras, podcasts and a lot of bands. As a guitarist, he has appeared on more than a dozen albums of original music, sharing the stage with acts from Guster and Here Come the Mummies to eighth blackbird and Charlie Parr. An experienced teacher, Blanck has presented educational workshops with partner organizations like Carnegie Hall, Minnesota Public Radio and the Mile of Music Music Education Team. He works as assistant to Minneapolis' super-producer Lazerbeak (Lizzo, Doja Cat, Doomtree), and is currently pursuing a Master of Music in music composition at CU Boulder, where he teaches undergraduate introduction to music technology.

## Ryan Flat

Ryan Flat is a composer, instrumentalist and vocalist studying at CU Boulder. Greatly inspired by the music of movies, television and video games, he embraces musical storytelling and imagery in his writing, often crafting his music in support of a greater narrative and artistic experience. As a performer, he sings with CU Boulder's chamber singers, Renova New Music Ensemble, and the CU Buffoons: the oldest acapella group at CU. He has also played trombone and percussion in CU Boulder's symphonic and campus bands, and is acting as drum major in the "Golden Buffalo" Marching Band. Flat is in his third year pursuing undergraduate degrees in music and geology, and a certificate in music technology.

## Joshua Carter Maynard

Joshua Carter Maynard is an author and composer from Colorado Springs currently studying a BM in composition at the University of Colorado Boulder. Beginning his musical experience in middle school choir, Maynard has since performed with vocal ensembles on stages from the Pikes Peak Center and Colorado Bellco Theater, to Carnegie Hall. Maynard is also the founder of the Kadet Chorale, the first honor choir at the Air Academy. After attaining an Eagle Scout at age 15, he joined the International Thespian Honor Society, performing lead roles in *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Les Miserables*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and *Mamma Mia*.

His major choral compositions and contemporary arrangements began with his first state-wide premier in January 2020 at the Colorado Music Educators Association conference. The CMEA performance of his CHSAA awarded *Lux Aeterna*, for twelve part choir and piano, sparked his decision to pursue a higher education in music. Subsequent performances of Maynard's works include an orchestral debut of *Winterdove* at the University of Denver, and multiple Pendulum New Music concerts at CU Boulder—including *Los Recuerdos* and the award-winning *Young Years Suite* for choir, as well as *Dragonfly Pond* for wind quintet and *Compass* for piano.

Striving to tell moving stories in writing as well as through music, JC Maynard recently published his first fantasy novel, *The Four Sunrises*, available now in print and eBook on Amazon. He is currently writing the second novel, and as always, more music.

## **Holly McMahon**

Holly McMahon is a first-year composition student from Denver, Colorado. She studies composition with Annika Socolofsky and performance piano with Andrew Cooperstock. She won third place in the 2021 National Federation of Music Clubs Junior Composer Contest in 2021 and participated in the National Federation of Music Clubs American Composers festival in 2018, 2019 and 2022 (performing on the piano). She studied with Stephanie Cheng, of the University of Denver, as well as jazz piano, classical piano and classical composition with various other private instructors. Her music is inspired largely by the repertoire she studies on the piano, as well as other music she listens to. She is excited to be a part of the CU Boulder College of Music.

## **Rain Michael**

A native of Colorado, Rain Michael is a multi-instrumentalist and composer. Michael began taking piano lessons before the age of four and has since picked up over a dozen instruments, both classical and of foreign traditions. They have performed with jazz, wind, orchestral and marching ensembles, all of which have served to cultivate a passion for composition. Michael is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Music in composition, a BA in psychology, a minor in linguistics, and a certificate in cognitive science at CU Boulder, which influence both their compositions and interest in the subjective, psychological experiences involved in music performance.

## **Mary Letera**

Mary Letera is an intermedia artist working with technology to meld together the spheres of light, sound and dance. She is currently an ATLAS Master's candidate.

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