



Presents

Jakab O. Macias, Saxophone
Dr. Cecilia Lo-Chien Kao, Piano

Thursday, April 6th

7 PM

PepsiCo. Recital Hall

Program

Fuzzy Bird Sonata (1991)

Takashi Yoshimatsu
(1953)

- I. Run, Bird*
- II. Sing, Bird*
- III. Fly, Bird*

Three Letter Word (2010)

Andy Scott
(1966)

Escapades (2002)

John Williams
(1932)

- I. Closing In*
- II. Reflections*
- III. Joy Ride*

Brief Pause

Jazz Combo

Sebastian Marin, Trumpet

Alfredo Ortiz, Piano

Blaine Bryan, Bass

Gabe Sanchez, Drums

Dat Dere (1960)

Bobby Timmons

(1935-1974)

Goodbye Mr. Evans (1981)

Phil Woods

(1931-2015)

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's Degree in Music Performance. Jakob Macias is a student of Mr. Joseph Eckert. The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited.

Please silence all electronic devices including watches, pagers, and phones.

Fuzzy Bird Sonata is a work that provides the saxophonist and pianist with many ensemble challenges and opportunities for artistic freedom. Takashi Yoshimatsu was fascinated with Beethoven and Tchaikovsky as a child and went on to join a jazz and rock band during his time at Keio University. He was inspired by birds and nature, and creates a fusion of styles in his music, opposing what he calls “unmusical” modern music. In this work, you will hear jazz, rock, and classical influences, as well as extended techniques that emulate birds. Yoshimatsu wrote this sonata for virtuoso, Nobuya Sugawa, in 1991, continuing his series of Bird-inspired compositions. Sugawa studied at the Tokyo University of Arts with Yuichi Omuro, is a prolific recording artist with over 30 albums, and is a leader in commissioning new works for the saxophone.

Three Letter Word is a piece by British composer Andy Scott that explores death, how to honor loss, and the range of emotions that grief brings. The piece opens with an anguished scream from the alto saxophone, accompanied by a descending rolled chord in the piano. Our slow, pained descent into grief and sorrow evolves into an exploration of anger and the uncertainty of grief. The uneven meter of the fast section (7/4 and 9/4) helps to portray uncertainty, although we do feel metrical and emotional reprieve in the 4/2 section at measure 38, we quickly return to the uneven meter and rage of the fast section at measure 70. The piano plays an interlude to acceptance of our loss, leading to the swan song of the piece. The closing section of this piece marks our acceptance of loss and grief and a melancholy introspection. The piece seems to finish with a final hushed minor chord and piano embellishment, but we feel one last twinge of grief in the two-measure coda of the work.

Scott dedicates this piece to the memory of Swedish composer and pianist, Esbjörn Svensson, who passed away in a diving accident at only 44 years old. The “three letter word” stands for a variety of phrases and names: Esbjörn Svensson’s group (Esbjörn

Svensson Trio or e.s.t.), Park Lane Group the commissioner, the players the piece was written for, and most importantly: r.i.p.

Escapades is a three-movement work from the 2002 film *Catch Me If You Can*.

Legendary composer John Williams created the film's score, inspired by the cool jazz movement of the film's 1960 setting. Maybe based on true events (the film's protagonist recently came out and said he made it all up), the film tells the story of Frank Abagnale, a con artist, imposter, and career criminal. Williams wanted the alto saxophone to be the vehicle for the expression of the film's music, resulting in collaboration with prolific recording artist and saxophonist Dan Higgins.

We explore a range of affectations in this work, from deviousness, sleuthing, and "cool" in *Closing In*, to the fragility of relationships, broken homes, and sorrow in *Reflections*, to wild fantasies of adventure and mischief in *Joy Ride*. Williams truly captures the psyche of a criminal mastermind and the reflections of a broken family that created Frank Abagnale.

Bobby Timmons's tune **Dat Dere** is a gospel-infused soul tune (part of "soul jazz" of the early 1960s), rich with blues harmonies. It is in 32-bar song form—AABA—and its melody features triplet and blues / pentatonic lines. Timmons first recorded this tune on his 1960 album *This Here is Bobby Timmons*, and later the same year with the Cannonball Adderley Quintet on *Them Dirty Blues* and with Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers on the album *The Big Beat*. Oscar Brown Jr. later wrote lyrics to the tune inspired by his very precocious and inquisitive son.

*Don't wanna comb my hair
And where's my teddy bear?
Mummy, up here!
Look at the cowboy coming there!
And can I have a pair
Of boots like that to wear?
And mummy can I have that big elephant over there?*

I chose to perform this tune tonight because of the story of how I first became acquainted with it. When I was a junior in high school, my jazz band director invited a few of us to play in a band as a part of a seminar for TJEA on how to direct and rehearse a jazz ensemble. One of the charts they gave us to prepare for the demonstration was a big band arrangement of Dat Dere. The lead alto player happened to be someone who had placed first chair in the all-state jazz band for 3 years in a row. This was one of the times in my career when I felt out of my league, but I just saw it as an opportunity to learn and grow and become inspired by where I could go with jazz.

Following the death of jazz pianist Bill Evans in 1980, Phil Woods composed the tune **Goodbye Mr. Evans** in commemoration of his passing. Woods says that *“When Bill died it was a tragic loss to the music world and a traumatic event for his family and friends, of which I was one. We were talking about doing a project together. This song took over a year to complete. The gestation period was lengthy and arduous. I think it is one of my best.”* This is a simple but beautiful melody, in a 26-bar form. I will let the tune speak for itself, describing the theory behind the harmonies and progression will not do it justice, so I’ll just tell you about my connection to this ballad. As one does on the internet, I stumbled across a YouTube video of The Phil Woods Quartet’s 1982 album *Birds of a Feather*, track two “Goodbye Mr. Evans.” I was immediately struck by how beautiful, but sorrowful the tune was, and I think it resonated with me because it was a pure expression of emotion in music. And then, music was my way of expressing any emotion I felt, so hearing someone else do that in such a raw form impacted me.

I am performing this today as my goodbye to TCU, goodbye to this chapter in my life, and goodbye to my mentor Mr. Eckert. We’ve known each other for maybe about 10 years now, but it feels like it’s gone by in the blink of an eye. When I first met him when I was 13, I had no idea where my life would have taken me, but I know I am exactly where I am supposed to be, and I can take all the things I’ve learned with him onto the next chapter. So, thank you all for listening tonight, and Goodbye Mr. Eckert (and TCU!)