



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

Nathan Mertens, saxophone
Tomoko Kashiwagi, piano

“Story Time”

October 2nd, 2023

8:30 PM

PepsiCo Recital Hall

Program

Lilac Tears (2022)

Jennifer Jolley

(b.1981)

Rapsodie (1911)

Claude Debussy

(1862-1918)

New Stories (2013)

I. Floating Worlds

II. A Tall Tale Told

III. Reflection

IV. Folksong

Dorothy Chang

(b. 1970)

This Earthly Round

Miriama Young

(b. 1975)

“Season of Remembrance” from *On Consciousness Streams*

Jacqueline B. Hairston

(b. 1932)

The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited.
Please silence all electronic devices including watches, pagers, and phones.

Biographies

US-based saxophonist, **Nathan Mertens** (he/him) currently serves as Assistant Professor of Saxophone at the University of Colorado Boulder. As an active soloist and chamber musician, he has performed recitals in Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Bolivia, the United Kingdom, and throughout the United States. He has performed as a soloist with orchestras including the Busan Philharmonic Orchestra, Hastings Symphony Orchestra, The University of Texas Symphony Orchestra, and the University of Arkansas Saxophone Ensemble. Mertens' orchestral experience includes performances with the San Antonio Symphony and the Omaha Symphony. In competition, he was awarded Third Prize in the 14th Kurashiki International Saxophone Competition, Second Grand Prize in the North International Music Competition in Sweden, and has been a finalist for many national competitions.

Previously, Mertens lived in Tokyo, Japan as a Monbukagakusho Research Scholarship recipient with the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology. As such, Mertens was the first American Saxophonist to formally study in Japan. Realizing that awareness and access to Japanese music were lacking in the West, Mertens created the Japanese Saxophone Database, a resource to connect the rest of the world with all things saxophone in Japan. While in Tokyo, he performed with the Kunitachi Saxophone Ensemble, the Japan Saxophone Orchestra, Marie Kikuchi, and Emi Kondo.

Mertens has commissioned and premiered works by composers including Lucy Armstrong, Akiro Ito, Sachie Kobayashi, Andrew Boss, Rob Buckland, and Zach Browning. He has premiered these works with many ensembles across the globe at the World Saxophone Congress, North American Saxophone Alliance Conference, and other concert venues. Most recently, he commissioned Anthony R. Green for a work entitled, "kWEe(a)r(e)," which centers around celebrating and uplifting queer identities.

As a clinician, Mertens has been a guest artist at the Conservatorio Plurinacional de Música (Bolivia), Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (Singapore), and many universities and high schools throughout the United States. Mertens has previously been on the faculty at the University of Arkansas, Baylor University, and Hastings College.

Mertens studied at The University of Texas at Austin - Butler School of Music, Hastings College, and Kunitachi College of Music, with Stephen Page, Debra Rhodes, and Masato Kumoi, respectively. Mertens is a D'Addario Woodwind Artist, a Yamaha Performing Artist, and a Rousseau Artist Endorser, and performs exclusively on these products.

Pianist **Tomoko Kashiwagi** finds great joy in playing the diverse repertoire she encounters as a performer and as an educator. Kashiwagi believes in the importance of lifelong learning, intellectual curiosity, and being inspired by the dynamic, creative people in this world.

Kashiwagi completed her Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees as well as the Performer Diploma in Piano Performance at Indiana University where she studied with Professors Shigeo and Reiko Neriki. It did not take long for Kashiwagi to realize the importance of chamber music and ensemble playing as a musician and that she truly enjoys interacting with other musicians. She is the first recipient of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Collaborative Piano from the University of Texas at Austin where she studied with Prof. Anne Epperson.

Kashiwagi is at ease performing with instruments and vocalists, with diverse repertoire ranging from Baroque to modern, non-traditional styles and newly commissioned pieces. She has performed in such prestigious venues as the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Central Conservatory in Beijing, and Guildhall School in London among others. Kashiwagi was the staff pianist for six summers at the renowned Meadowmount School of Music where talented string students gather from around the world. She has also spent several summers as a pianist at the Interlochen Intensive Institute for the double reed players. She is frequently invited to be the official pianist for conferences, competitions, and festivals throughout the United States, including Menuhin International Violin Competition in 2014 and International Tuba and Euphonium Conference in 2019.

Kashiwagi joined the faculty at the University of Arkansas- Fayetteville in 2012. Currently, she is the Associate Professor of Piano and Collaborative Piano and holder of the Emily J. McAllister Endowed Chair. She keeps a busy schedule balancing her teaching at the university as well as a small private studio, performing as a collaborative pianist, and as the principal keyboard player of the Symphony of Northwest Arkansas. As the winner of the 2023 Community Activator grant from the Mid-America Arts Alliance, Kashiwagi continues to spread the joy of chamber music in northwest Arkansas as the Artistic Director of the Chamber Music of the Ozarks and the Chamber Music on the Mountain Summer Festival.