



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

## Spring 2025 Student Composers Recital

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

7pm

Ed Landreth Auditorium

### Program

The Poetry of Life (2023)  
*vi. Warm Water*

Kyle Cornelison  
(b. 2004)

*Kyle Cornelison, Piano*

Sonatine for Tuba and Piano (2025)  
*I. A Brisk Moment Of*  
*II. Time and Essence, Flowing*

Benjamin Lindley  
(b. 2004)

*Benjamin Lindley, Tuba*  
*Skyler Cloyd, Piano*

Sogni e Incubi (2025)

Jordan Simmons  
(b. 2006)

*Eva Renadat, Violin*  
*Jason Vierra, Cello*  
*Nikita Simonenko, Piano*

Dawn Chorus (2024)

Frederic Situmorang  
(b. 2006)

*Junhwi Goo, Flute*  
*Edgar Vasquez, Oboe*  
*Pablo Albert, Bb Clarinet*

Caprice No. 2 (2025)

Joey Tullis  
(b. 2003)

*Joey Tullis, Viola*

A Chilango in Escondido (2023)

Diego Roman Martinez  
(b. 1983)

*Nick Shea, Trombone*

The Overstory (2024)

Skyler Cloyd  
(b. 2004)

*Skyler Cloyd, Piano*

Four Miniatures for Piano (2025)

*I. Parthenope*

*II. Gymnopédie*

*III. Maelstrom*

*IV. Charon's Waltz*

Frederic Situmorang  
(b. 2006)

*Frederic Situmorang, Piano*

Piano Concerto No. 1 in G Minor (2025)

*I. Andante – Allegro*

Kyle Cornelison  
(b. 2004)

*Kyle Cornelison, Soloist*  
*Josh Stanczak, Accompanist*

Summer in Argyle (2024)

Chase Morrison  
(b. 2004)

*Joey Tullis, Violin 1*  
*Natalie Caldwell, Violin 2*  
*Daniel Compton, Viola*  
*Grady O'Gara, Cello*

M.I.A.! (2024)

Jordan Simmons  
(b. 2006)

*Chase Morrison, Violin 1*  
*Eva Renadat, Violin 2*  
*Kaylan Walker, Viola*  
*Jason Vierra, Cello*  
*Jordan Simmons, Bass*  
*Evan Wasson, Drumset*

Kyle Cornelison and Chase Morrison are students of Dr. Blaise Ferrandino. Joey Tullis and Skyler Cloyd are students of Dr. Martin Blessinger. Benjamin Lindley is a student of Dr. Till Meyn. Jordan Simmons and Frederic Situmorang are students of Mr. Trey Gunter.

The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited.

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

## Program Notes

### **The Poetry of Life (Kyle Cornelison)**

*vi. Warm Water (2023)*

This is the sixth movement in a set of short piano pieces entitled "The Poetry of Life". Here is what I have written about the set:

The Poetry of Life is in the ordinary and extraordinary. It is the small things you see out of your car's foggy window in the morning, and the large things you see through a telescope. It is the feeling one gets when they, for a brief moment, have a mere glimpse at the incredible scope of God's creation. It is the marvel of existence.

The title of this movement, Warm Water, is a reference to TCU's very own Frog Fountain. Scene: in the heat of the day, after school is out—I have just finished practicing, I am hungry, and exhausted, and as I bask in the sun on my way to the BLUU to eat and rest, I see the fountain and its warm water - the "Poetry of Life" here is the appreciation of the concept of beauty, even in exhaustion. It is an enjoyment of being alive, even when you are tired of life's monotony for an infinitely small moment in comparison to eternity. I hope that you enjoy it!

### **Sonatine for Tuba and Piano (Benjamin Lindley)**

*I. A Brisk Moment Of*

*II. Time and Essence, Flowing*

In writing this three-movement sonatina, I want to encapsulate my ventures in exploring my mental health. As someone who deals with frequent strifes of anxiety and depression, I feel it important to incorporate my feelings of uncertainty and scarcity into my music and to create a tangible representation of my mental health and the ways that I deal with it. The first movement of this piece, set in sonata form, reflects the abrupt and sporadic chaotic nature of anxiety. Playful ideas are introduced in the primary theme, but anger and uncertainty darken and distort it as the exposition transitions into the secondary theme. Throughout the piece, the recurring motif is distorted and mangled against more dissonant and chaotic sonorities, representing how anxiety can tear at one's mind. The recapitulation ends in a darker mode, suggesting feelings of anxiety can still linger even after such a brisk moment. The second movement is an aria, reflecting the circulatory relationship mental health has on life. The upper register of the piano cries out and rings continuously while the lower register whales under while the tuba cries through, combining to establish a continuous pulse tugging at the listener. The dark and mysterious, yet monotonous fluidity of the music suggests fear for what is to come next and reflects how people facing mental health issues have to continue forth, flowing through life, while concealing the horrors that they may be dealing with all within their heads.

### **Dawn Chorus (Frederic Situmorang)**

I do not usually write music with titles in mind – I almost always find a title that fits the piece sometime after it is finished. With this piece, I settled on the title immediately after finishing the first draft. “Dawn Chorus” refers to the breakout of birdsong at the beginning of the day, most noticeably in the spring. Structured in compound ternary form, the piece revolves around various distinct themes that are passed from instrument to instrument, reminiscent of the different types of bird calls one can hear in the early morning.

### **Caprice No. 2 (Joey Tullis)**

Caprice No. 2 is a short piece for solo viola. It features three main contrasting motives that get restated and transfigured throughout the piece. With its certain waltz-like character, the piece is rhythmically urgent, but harmonically contemplative.

### **A Chilango in Escondido (Diego Roman Martinez)**

A Chilango in Escondido was written in my last year at Westminster Seminary California. I was currently working on my Master’s thesis, exploring the history of Guatemala, and Daniel Carroll’s Guatemalan reading of the Book of Amos. I was also applying to doctoral programs. When I asked one of my professors for a recommendation letter, he refused and pointed out a long footnote in which I explained why I disagreed with him. This footnote explained why, as a Latin American, I saw the US as a modern empire, and with Carroll, read Amos as a denunciation of nationalistic civil religion. His response was that “I should be thankful to the empire.” This event opened my eyes to understanding the ideological divide between evangelical and mainline protestants.

The piece reflects my experience in Escondido, California, where Westminster is located. It is a combination of Gershwinian spectacle, reflecting the privilege I enjoyed while living in the US, as well as my questions, anxieties, and deep pains, around inequality, indifference, and the confusion of American exceptionalism with the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is written like a solo and orchestra concerto in one movement, with a cadenza in the middle. The track combines orchestral, latine and electronic sounds, and is dedicated to a fellow seminary student, Joe Varádi.

### **The Overstory (Skyler Cloyd)**

The Overstory is a minimalistic piano piece whose name is inspired by the novel *The Overstory* by Richard Powers. It is about experiencing life and time from the perspective of trees, which correlates with the slowly evolving stasis of the piece.

### **Four Miniatures for Piano (Frederic Situmorang)**

*I. Parthenope*

*II. Gymnopédie*

*III. Maelstrom*

*IV. Charon’s Waltz*

This is a planned set of about a dozen miniatures for solo piano, each being around one to three minutes long. For me, this project is an outlet to write and develop little tidbits of ideas that weren't substantial enough to be used in a larger piece. Each miniature stands on its own and does not feature connections with the others from the set, differing widely in style, mood, and harmonic language.

### *Parthenope*

Parthenope is one of the sirens featured in Homer's *Odyssey*. After failing to tempt Odysseus, she drowned herself in the sea. This miniature features impressionistic flourishes and arpeggios, but also features harmonies commonly used in film music.

### *Gymnopédie*

The word "Gymnopédie" comes from the Ancient Greek word *gymnopaedia*, referring to an Ancient Greek festival involving nude dancing. In popular culture, Erik Satie's *Gymnopédies* immediately come to mind. This miniature is named after that style, with its slow triple meter and lumbering accompaniment. Unlike Satie, however, the piece is also sprinkled with harmonies found in blues music.

### *Maelstrom*

This dense miniature centers around two themes: a short fanfare-esque flourish and a longer, rising arpeggio followed by a descending scale. Over the course of about one minute, these two themes are restated and placed in different tonal centers, culminating in a final, triumphant restatement of the fanfare theme.

### *Charon's Waltz*

This miniature is a short bi-tonal waltz. The right hand starts in G-sharp minor and the left hand in E minor, which switches throughout the piece – both hands are never playing in the same key at the same time. This allows for some interesting harmonies and colors in an otherwise harmonically conventional piece. The miniature is named after Charon, the ferryman of the Underworld in Ancient Greek mythology, which is also the name of the dwarf planet Pluto's binary moon.

## **Piano Concerto No. 1 in G Minor (Kyle Cornelison)**

### *I. Andante – Allegro*

It is January 2nd. I am standing by the sliding glass back door of my home and I'm looking out at the trees. I hear a melody in my head — I usually don't. It's a trumpet concerto. "But I don't want to write that today, I'm not feeling it," I tell myself, immediately followed by "might as well."

I didn't write that. I actually immediately forgot the melody. But I still sat down at the piano with a pencil and blank sheet music, ready to write a trumpet concerto. Then the basses came in with a melody from an abandoned piano quintet of mine. "Oh, maybe this is my symphony no. 1," I thought. Then I heard the piano entrance. "Oh. Nice."

I am incredibly inspired by Rachmaninoff's piano concerti. I had been listening to them almost daily throughout the winter break. I began to tell myself the same mantra that Rachmaninoff told himself when he wrote his 2nd concerto - it actually helped. Then, I

learned that week that my former piano teacher, Dr. Alex McDonald, would be playing the 3rd movement of the second concerto. 2 days after I began writing the concerto, I decided that I would dedicate the work to him. Besides my parents, he is my greatest mentor and one of the most important voices in my life.

### **Summer in Argyle (Chase Morrison)**

I would describe myself as an astutely visual composer, as most of the music I produce has been based on my visual experiences. Having grown up in and spent much of my childhood summers in Argyle, TX, the visual environment around me played a significant role in the development of my interests, personality, and ambitions, and I credit many of my most significant personal memories to the summer adventures with my friends, long walks with family, and personal experiences during my childhood summers. From its sprawling fields to its dazzling sun to its wide-open Texas skies, this piece seeks to visually capture my hometown of Argyle, TX, paying homage to the land that has sparked many of the fondest memories and relationships I have made throughout my life. Please enjoy!