



# SAXOPHONE GENESIS

*New Works at the Kennedy Center*

**August 25, 2019, 6:00 PM**

*Kennedy Center  
Millennium Stage*

# Saxophone Genesis

## New Works at the Kennedy Center

### **into emptiness (2019), by Baljinder Sekhon (b. 1980) \*World Premiere\***

Laurel Irene, *voice*  
Kenneth Cox, *flute*  
Doug O'Connor, *alto saxophone*  
Baljinder Sekhon, *computer*

### **an assemblage of possibilities (2019), by Jeffrey Mumford (b. 1955) \*World Premiere\***

- I. Maestoso
- II. Sonoro
- III. Espressivo
- IV. Molto Appassionato
- V. Molto Risoluto

Doug O'Connor, *tenor saxophone*  
Ben Wensel, *cello*  
and Annie Ray, *harp*

### **Primitive Roots (2019), by Robert Morris (b. 1943) \*World Premiere\***

- I. Part 1
- II. Part 2

Doug O'Connor, *alto and soprano saxophones*  
Dan Campolieta, *piano*

### **Ajax is all about attack 2 (2019), by Robert Hasegawa (b. 1976) \*World Premiere\***

Doug O'Connor, *alto saxophone* and Jacob Harpster, *percussion*

### **Consume by... (2019), by Osnat Netzer (b. 1979) \*World Premiere\***

Kenneth Cox, *flute*  
Ben Bokor, *clarinet and bass clarinet*  
Doug O'Connor, *soprano and baritone saxophones*  
Omar Dejesus, *trombone*  
Ben Wensel, *amplified cello*  
Zack Pride, *electric bass*  
Dan Campolieta, *piano*  
Jacob Harpster, *drum set*  
Osnat Netzer, *conductor*

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# PROGRAM NOTES

## **INTO EMPTINESS (2019)**

*into emptiness* is scored for saxophone, flute, soprano voice, and real-time triggered electronics. The work is a setting of an untitled text by the 13th-century Persian poet Rumi that explores the nuances, granular components, and anatomy of the sounds of the three acoustic elements performed on stage. A wide collection of sounds sampled directly from the performers premiering the work are used to create the electronic component of the work. The samples are often heard deconstructed, creating an array of percussive sounds, and the live performers employ extended techniques to create a union between the electronic and acoustic sound worlds of this work. Several computer programs were used to create the samples, and the samples are triggered in real time through the course of performance.

Text by Rumi:

*I have lived on the edge of insanity,  
wanting to know reasons,  
knocking on a door. It opens.  
I've been knocking on the inside!*

*Real value comes with madness  
enlightened below, science above.*

*Whoever finds love  
beneath hurt and grief*

*disappears into emptiness  
with a thousand new disguises.*

—Baljinder Sekhon

## **AN ASSEMBLAGE OF POSSIBILITIES (2019)**

The present work commissioned by Doug O'Connor, entitled an assemblage of possibilities, is a work that can be performed in a number of configurations: as a duo for tenor sax and cello, a duo for cello & harp, a duo for tenor sax and harp, and of course as the full trio, allowing for and celebrating the wide array of timbral and expressive possibilities of this ensemble – hence the title.

My work is inspired by cloud imagery, and the qualities of light, and time of day. I am fascinated by the layers that result from the differing rates of

speed at which these clouds move. I find compelling the speed with which clouds move; splitting off and recombining with one another; reforming and sometimes dissipating entirely. This, I think, is an operative analogy to the approach I take in my work. I am interested in setting up layers of simultaneous activity in which musical lines often develop independently of each other. This developmental scenario (which can be seen as analogous to being at a party where one person 'holds court' and others try with varying degrees of success to 'get a word in edgewise') involves many different kinds of activity, including dialogues between layers, which constantly vie for prominence.

—Jeffrey Mumford

## **PRIMITIVE ROOTS (2019)**

*Primitive Roots* comes in two parts. Part 1 is for soprano saxophone and piano; Part 2 is for alto saxophone and piano. The two parts may be played alone, or one after the other (in either order).

I wrote these pieces in 2018-2019 at the request of saxophonist Douglas O'Connor, who has continually championed the composition of new works for his instrument.

The title comes from the way in which the pitch material of the piece was generated. Using a mathematical structure involving a "primitive root," I was able to compose a 36-note cycle that has some very interesting musical properties. For instance, if you take every other note of the cycle, you get the same cycle transposed by a semitone. Mathematical or not, "primitive root" captures the emotional character of the piece; this perhaps suggests that music that is wild and turbulent can also be elegant and refined at once.

Part two uses the 36-note note-cycle to form various contrapuntal textures. Part 1 is derived from smaller cycles that can be extracted from the 36-tone cycle. These smaller cycles get longer as the piece goes on.

—Robert Morris

## **AJAX IS ALL ABOUT ATTACK 2 (2019)**

This composition, commissioned by and dedicated to the Arête Duo (Doug O'Connor, saxophone, and Jacob Harpster, percussion), is the second in a projected series of four duos for saxophone and percussion. The original

## PROGRAM NOTES *(continued)*

*Ajax is all about attack*, played recently by the Arête Duo at the Navy Band International Saxophone Symposium and previously performed and recorded by several other duos, is written for soprano saxophone and a small setup of unpitched percussion. The sequel is composed for alto saxophone with a selection of metallic percussion focusing on the vibraphone and cymbals. *Ajax is all about attack 2* seeks to draw connections between the complex inharmonic timbres of resonant metal instruments and the rich sounds of saxophone multiphonics. The unusual acoustic characteristics of multiphonics (and particularly their close links to the electronic music technique of frequency modulation) are the basis of the piece's microtonal pitch language. The piece extends my theoretical exploration of a quartertone pitch language and spectral harmonies based on sum and difference tones, melding the saxophone, vibraphone, and cymbals into unique timbral composites.

*Ajax is all about attack* takes its title from a short story by Jim Shepard featuring the Amsterdam soccer team Ajax and their groundbreaking, cerebral strategy of "total football": "It was about making space, coming into space, and organizing space—like architecture on the football pitch." My composition seeks a similar fluidity of interaction between the two players, who constantly reshape the musical space of the piece through their actions and reactions.

—Robert Hasegawa

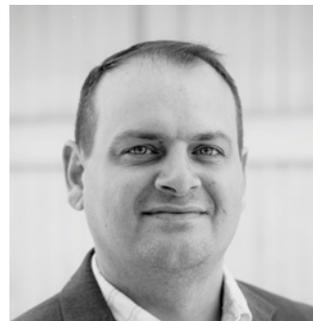
### **CONSUME BY... (2019)**

... plays with the notion of beat, whether it be the beat created by sound waves that cancel each other at periodic intervals, an instrument's vibrato, deliberate repetition, or an embodied sense of pulse. If beats are our main course, our side dishes must involve the lack of beat, and the metamorphosis of one pulse to a different pulse. *Consume by...* manifests my fascination with rhythm. In this piece, every musical element (such as timbre, harmony, melody, and contour) is sifted through the colander of rhythm and beat. Despite the title, I believe that explorations of rhythm and beat have no expiration date. Rather, the urgency of the music exhorts us to hurry up and do all of the things we wish to do or ought to do in our lives.

—Osnat Netzer



## COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES



### **BALJINDER SEKHON (b. 1980)**

"Clearly knowing the power of sonority" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*), the music of Baljinder Sekhon has been presented in over 500 concerts in 20 countries. From works for large ensembles to solo works to electronic music, Sekhon's oeuvre demonstrates a wide range of genres and styles.

In July 2019, Sekhon's double concerto *Ways of Discovery*, for oboe, bassoon, and orchestra, was premiered at the International Double Reed Society (IDRS) Conference 2019. Also in 2019, Sekhon's new orchestral work *STARS* was premiered by The Florida Orchestra (Michael Francis, director) during The Florida Orchestra's Masterworks Series Concerts. In March 2017, The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" presented a portrait concert of Sekhon's chamber music in Arlington, VA. Also in 2017, Sekhon's works were presented at the Kennedy Center and at the EurSax2017 Conference (Portugal), where he joined composer Johan de Meij as a guest presenter for the Composer in First Person lectures. His recent *Double Percussion Concerto* and his choral work *There Are No Words* were both premiered at Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium Perelman Stage. His orchestral work *The Offering* is a 22-minute, three-movement concerto for saxophone and orchestra that received its premiere by saxophonist Doug O'Connor and the Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as a performance at the opening concert of the North American Saxophone Alliance National Conference in 2017 with the CCM Symphony Orchestra. Sekhon's work *Civil Variations*, for orchestra, was performed at the Albany Symphony's

## COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES (*continued*)

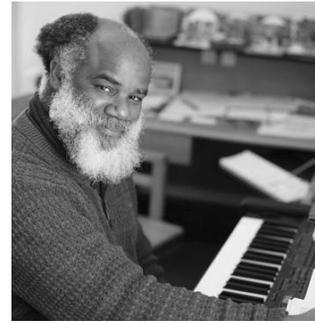
### **BALJINDER SEKHON**, *continued*

American Music Festival in 2015, and *Ancient Dust*, also for orchestra, was premiered at the Cabrillo Festival for Contemporary Music, where it was described as “still and mysterious, animated, haunting and peaceful” by the *Epoch Times*. Recent commissions include Sekhon’s involvement in the Global Premiere Consortium Commissioning Project, which resulted in his work *Sonata of Puzzles*, composed for over 50 of the top saxophonists from around the world. In 2015, over 40 percussionists joined together to commission *Passageways*, a solo steel pan and percussion ensemble work, which was premiered by soloist Dave Gerhart and the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras Percussion Ensemble.

Numerous commercial recordings of Sekhon’s music have been released, including those on Albany Records, Parma, AMP Records, Mark Records, Klarthe Records, BCM&D Records, and Equilibrium Records. A portrait CD of Sekhon’s music, featuring the Los Angeles Percussion Quartet, line upon line percussion trio, guitarist Dieter Hennings, and the McCormick Percussion Group, was released on Innova Records in April 2018. Sheet music of Sekhon’s works is available internationally from Keyboard Percussion Publications, Glass Tree Press, Steve Weiss Music, Le Vent Music (Taiwan), AvA Musical Editions (Europe), and Southern Percussion (UK).

Sekhon currently serves as Assistant Professor of Composition at Penn State University. Previously, Sekhon taught composition and electronic music at the University of South Florida, where he received a 2017 Outstanding Undergraduate Teacher award. He holds PhD and MA degrees from the Eastman School of Music, where he is a three-time recipient of the Howard Hanson Orchestral prize, and he holds a BM from the University of South Carolina. Additional honors include the Wayne Brewster Barlow Prize, New Music USA’s Composer Assistance Grant, Audio Inversions, Percussive Arts Society Composition Competition, Brian M. Israel Prize, Boehmler Foundation Commission, MetLife Creative Connections Grant, Belle Gitelman Prize, Barbara B. Smith Prize, multiple awards from ASCAP including the Morton Gould Young Composer Award (2006), and he was named the MTNA/FSMTA Commissioned Composer of 2012. Sekhon’s numerous appearances as a percussionist include those at the L.A. Philharmonic’s Green Umbrella Series in Walt Disney Hall, Festival Spazio Musica in Cagliari, Italy, and the Bang On a Can Marathon in New York City.

For more information, visit <http://www.SekhonMusic.com>.



### **JEFFREY MUMFORD (b. 1955)**

Born in Washington, DC, in 1955, composer Jeffrey Mumford has received numerous fellowships, grants, awards, and commissions. Awards include the “Academy Award in Music” from the American Academy of Arts & Letters, a Fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation, and an ASCAP Aaron Copland Scholarship. He was also the winner of the inaugural National Black Arts Festival/Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Composition Competition. Other grants have been awarded by the Ohio Arts Council, Meet the Composer, the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music Inc., the ASCAP Foundation, and the University of California.

Mumford’s most notable commissions include those from the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association and the Library of Congress (co-commission), the BBC Philharmonic, the San Antonio, Chicago & National Symphonies, Washington Performing Arts, the Network for New Music, cellist Mariel Roberts, the Fulcrum Point New Music Project (through New Music USA), Duo Harpverk (Iceland), the Sphinx Consortium, the Cincinnati Symphony, the VERGE Ensemble/National Gallery of Art/Contemporary Music Forum, the Argento Chamber Ensemble, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Nancy Ruyle Dodge Charitable Trust, the Meet the Composer/Arts Endowment Commissioning Music/USA, Cincinnati radio station WGUC, the Walter W. Naumburg Foundation, the Fromm Music Foundation, and the McKim Fund in the Library of Congress.

His music has been performed extensively by major orchestras, soloists, and ensembles, both in the United States and abroad, including London, Paris, Reykjavik, Vienna, The Hague, Russia, and Lithuania. Recent and forthcoming performances include the premiere of *...amid still and floating depths* by the Mivos Quartet as part of this season’s Los Angeles Philharmonic’s “Noon to Midnight” new music festival; *of fields unfolding . . . echoing depths of resonant light* by cellist Christine Lamprea and the San Antonio Symphony, New York-based Ensemble 212, the Detroit Symphony, and the Omaha Symphony; the promise of the far horizon by the Mivos Quartet; *...becoming clear* (solo viola) by the Network for New Music; performances of chamber and orchestral work as part of the June in Buffalo Festival; and of radiance blossoming in *expanding air* by cellist Deborah Pae and the Boston-based Phoenix Orchestra. As well, noted Italian pianist Pina Napolitano will include Mumford’s two Elliott Carter tributes in her European concerts this and next season, with plans to record them as part of a disc of American piano music, in addition to *unfolding waves*, a concerto written for her, to be premiered with the Paris-

## COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES (*continued*)

### JEFFREY MUMFORD, *continued*

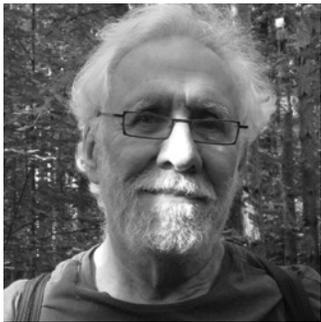
based new music ensemble Ars Nova.

Current projects include *brightness dispersed*, a concerto for cello and string orchestra for Mariel Roberts and the String Orchestra of Brooklyn, as well as a solo work for her, and *within diffuse echoes . . . softly spreading*, commissioned by the BBC Philharmonic.

Mumford has taught at the Washington Conservatory of Music, served as Artist-in-Residence at Bowling Green State University, and served as assistant professor of composition and Composer-in-Residence at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music. He is currently Distinguished Professor at Lorain County Community College in Northern Ohio.

Mumford is published by Theodore Presser Co. and Quicklight Music.

Website: [www.jeffreymumford.com](http://www.jeffreymumford.com)



### ROBERT MORRIS (b. 1943)

Born in Cheltenham, England, Robert Morris received his musical education at the Eastman School of Music (B.M. in composition with distinction) and the University of Michigan (M.M. and D.M.A. in composition and ethnomusicology), where he studied composition with John La Montaigne, Leslie Bassett, Ross Lee Finney, and Eugene Kurtz. At Tanglewood, as a Margret Lee Crofts Fellow, he worked

with Gunther Schuller. Morris has taught composition, electronic music, and music theory at the University of Hawaii and at Yale University, where he was Chairman of the Composition Department and Director of the Yale Electronic Music Studio. He was also Director of the Computer and Electronic Studio, Director of Graduate (music) Studies, and Associate Professor of Music at the University of Pittsburgh. In 1980, Morris joined the faculty of the Eastman School of Music, where he presently teaches as Professor of Composition, with additional affiliation within the theory and musicology departments.

Morris has been a guest composer at many festivals and series of new music, including most recently: Composer's Symposium (Albuquerque, 2009); the New Music Festival 2009 (Western Illinois University); Center for Research in Electronic Art Technology (University of California, Santa

Barbara, 2009); New Music Festival, MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music (Bowling Green State University, 2010); New Music on the Point (2015); and the University of South Florida at Tampa 2016 New Music Festival. He is the recipient of several grants and has received numerous awards and commissions, including those from the Pittsburgh Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Yale University, Speculum Musicae, Brave New Works, The Jack String Quartet, The Momenta String Quartet, The Society for New Music, Alienor Harpsichord Society, Hartt College Festival of Contemporary Organ Music, and the National Flute Association. His many compositions have been performed in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Morris's music is recorded on CRI, New World, Music Gallery Editions, Neuma, Music and Arts, Fanfare, Centaur, Open Space, Innova, Yank Gulch, Albany, and Attacca.

Morris has written music for a wide diversity of musical forms and media. He has composed over 160 works including computer and improvisational music. Much of his output from the 1970s is influenced by non-Western music and uses structural principles from Arabic, Indian, Indonesian, Japanese, and early Western musics. While such influences are less noticeable in his more recent works, the temporal and ornamental qualities of Eastern music have permanently affected Morris's style. Moreover, Morris has found much resonance among his musical aesthetics, his experiences in hiking (especially in the Southwestern United States), his study and appreciation of Carnatic Music of South India, and his reading of ancient Indian, Chinese, and Japanese Buddhist texts. Among his present compositional projects is a series of the works to be played outdoors in a natural setting. Six of these works are complete and have been performed throughout the United States: *Playing Outside* (2000), *Coming Down to Earth* (2002), *Oracle* (2005), *SOUND/PATH/FIELD* (2006), *Arboretum* (2007-8), and *Sun, Moon, Earth* (2012).

In addition to his music, Morris has written four books and over 50 articles and reviews that have appeared in the *Journal of Music Theory*, *In Theory Only*, *Music Theory Spectrum*, *Journal of the American Musicology Society*, and *Perspectives of New Music*, contributing to theories of musical analysis and aesthetics, compositional design, and electronic and computer music. Morris has also contributed to the study and analysis of Carnatic music of South India and helped develop a theoretical foundation for Chitravina N. Ravikiran's concept of Melharmony. Morris was the recipient of the "Outstanding Publication Award" of the Society for Music Theory in 1988 for his book *Composition with Pitch-Classes: A Theory of Compositional Design*, published by Yale University Press, and in 2001 for his article "Voice Leading Spaces" in *Music Theory Spectrum* (20/2). His most recent book, *The Whistling Blackbird: Essays and Talks on New Music*, was published by the University of Rochester Press in December of 2010. In 2017, The

## COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES (*continued*)

### **ROBERT MORRIS**, *continued*

Society for Music Theory Executive Board awarded Morris with Lifetime Membership, "in recognition of truly outstanding contributions to the field of music theory." Morris is presently Co-editor of *Perspectives of New Music* and Contributing Editor of *The Open Space Magazine*.



### **ROBERT HASEGAWA (b. 1976)**

Composer and music theorist Robert Hasegawa teaches at the Schulich School of Music of McGill University in Montreal, Canada. His compositions explore microtonal pitch systems, rhythmic indeterminacy, and spectral harmony. Recent projects include pieces for Frances-Marie Uitti, Stephen Drury and Yukiko Takagi, the Yesaroun' Duo, and the Callithumpian Consort.

Hasegawa's theoretical research includes articles on just intonation, timbre and orchestration, and the music of Gérard Grisey, Iannis Xenakis, Georg Friedrich Haas, and Hans Zender. He is the Associate Project Director of the interdisciplinary research project ACTOR (Analysis, Creation, and Teaching of Orchestration).

Since 2012, Hasegawa has taught an annual summer course on contemporary music in Paris, France, in association with the Eastman School of Music and IRCAM.



### **OSNAT NETZER (b. 1979)**

Osnat Netzer /os'nat 'nɛtsɛɪ/ is a composer, performer, and educator. Her kinetic, visceral, and highly theatrical compositions take inspiration from Embodied Cognition, Newtonian Mechanics, Composed Theatre and Aristotelian Energy, Potentiality, and Actuality and have been commissioned and performed by soprano Lucy Dhegrae, bass David Salsbery Fry, saxophonists Kenneth Radnofsky, Doug O'Connor, and Geoffrey

Landman, Patchwork, ICE (International Contemporary Ensemble), Spektral Quartet, and Winsor Music, among many others—published by Edition Peters and recorded on Bridge Records.

Netzer's opera *The Wondrous Woman Within* was described as "riotously funny" in *The New York Times* when its first scene was performed at New York City Opera's VOX festival in 2012 and "challenging and fascinating" by critic Amir Kidron when it received its premiere in a sold-out run at Tel Aviv's Cameri Theatre in 2015.

Born in Haifa, Israel, Netzer studied composition and piano at the Israel Arts and Science Academy and the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, where her primary composition teacher was Menachem Zur. She came to the United States in 2003 for graduate studies in composition with Robert Cuckson at Mannes and continued her studies with Lee Hyla at New England Conservatory, where she earned her doctorate in 2011.

As a pianist and performer, Netzer regularly plays and conducts new music by fellow composers, as well as her own songs and compositions. Also a committed and passionate educator, Netzer teaches at The Walden School and has served on the faculties of New England Conservatory, Longy School of Music of Bard College, and Harvard University. This fall, she joins the faculty of DePaul University as Assistant Professor of Composition and Musicianship.

# PERFORMING ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



## **LAUREL IRENE, voice**

Laurel Irene, Los Angeles-based vocal artist and voice researcher, specializes in bringing new compositional works to life with vocal repertoire ranging from Monteverdi to Mozart to the wacky, wild, and extreme sounds of the 21st century. With incredible vocal range, agile flexibility, and intense emotional connection that stretches from playful to unhinged in the span of a page, she draws on her expertise in vocal research

to heighten unique timbres, textures, and vocal expressions. A recent winner of the Beverly Hills National Auditions, she regularly performs with chamber and vocal music ensembles across Los Angeles.

As an avid voice educator and founder of the educational organization VoiceScienceWorks, she gives voice workshops at conferences and collegiate settings across the United States and Europe, including the Pan-American Vocology Association, American Choral Directors Association, Acoustical Society of America, Harvard University, College of the Holy Cross, California Institute for the Arts, University of California Los Angeles, and Cornish College of the Arts.

Ms. Irene is an alumna of performance programs at the USC Thornton School of Music, New Music on the Point, Cortona New Music Sessions, and the Summer Vocology Institute. Upcoming projects for 2019 include Poulenc's *La voix humaine* (CSULA), *Fauré's Requiem* (First Congregational Church, LA), and Ragnar Kjartansson's *Bliss*, a 12-hour loop of Mozart's final scenes from *The Marriage of Figaro* (REDCAT Fluxus Festival).



## **KENNETH COX, flute**

Described as "fierce...powerful" by *The Seattle Times* and "superhuman" by *Cleveland Classical*, Kenneth J. Cox is taking the music scene by storm. Armed with a large spectrum of musical styles, he has performed in over 20 internationally-acclaimed venues throughout the United States, Canada, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, the Netherlands, Ireland, China, and Japan, including the National Centre for the

Performing Arts (Beijing), Teatro Verdi (Florence), Shanghai Grand Theater,

Contemporary Arts Centre (Dublin), private concerts in The Vatican, and a recent performance in Carnegie Hall.

A specialist in contemporary music, Kenneth has championed the works of Pulitzer Prize winner Du Yun, Marcos Balter, and Dennis Sullivan and has collaborated with some of the world's leading musicians, including Claire Chase, Steven Schick, the International Contemporary Ensemble, Christian Wolff, Kate Soper, Jan Williams, members of the JACK Quartet, and Tony Arnold. He was recently a featured performer at the Noisefloor Festival (United Kingdom) and the Toronto International Electroacoustic Symposium and has held residencies at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, New Music on the Point, and the Atlantic Music Festival.

Kenneth is currently completing his Doctorate of Musical Arts in Contemporary Music at Bowling Green State University, where he serves as Teaching Assistant in the flute studio. In 2019-2020, Kenneth has performances and teaching engagements scheduled throughout Texas, Ohio, Florida, Italy, Tennessee, South Carolina, China, California, Maryland, South Africa, Denmark, and many others. Visit [www.kennethjcox.com](http://www.kennethjcox.com) for more information.



## **BEN BOKOR, clarinets**

A native of Chicago, IL, Benjamin Bokor has been a member of The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" since June of 2017, where he performs as a saxophone instrumentalist with the ceremonial band. He previously spent nine years as a clarinet instrumentalist with the U.S. Naval Academy Band and five years as a member of the U.S. Army Field Band.

Ben completed his undergraduate degree at Northwestern University, where he studied clarinet with Leslie Grimm. He continued his studies earning a Master of Music degree from the University of Maryland, where he studied jazz saxophone with Chris Vadala.

Ben performs as a woodwind artist for theatrical productions in the Washington, DC, area. He can be heard regularly at Signature Theatre, The Kennedy Center, and Ford's Theatre. He has performed with the New York City Ballet, the Suzanne Farrell Ballet, and musical legends Wayne Shorter, Bernadette Peters, Johnny Mathis, The Four Tops, and the Temptations..

## PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES *(continued)*



### **DOUG O'CONNOR, saxophones**

Praised for his "seamless technique" and "sumptuous lyricism" (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*), saxophonist Doug O'Connor has performed across Asia, Europe, and the U.S., including appearances at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Merkin Hall, Carnegie Hall, and Philadelphia's Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. He holds DMA and MM degrees from the Eastman School of Music and a BM in Saxophone

Performance from the University of Maryland. O'Connor recently served as Adjunct Assistant Professor of Saxophone at the Eastman School of Music, as Associate Lecturer of Saxophone at the University of Wisconsin in Eau Claire, as saxophonist with the United States Naval Academy Band, and is currently employed as ceremonial saxophonist with The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own."

O'Connor performed as a concerto soloist at the 2014 and 2018 North American Saxophone Alliance Biennial Conferences; at the World Saxophone Congress XV in Bangkok, where he gave the world-premiere performance of Christian Lauba's 15th etude, *Worksong*; and has been featured with the National Symphony Orchestra, Symphony in C, Musica Nova, the Eastman and University of Wisconsin Eau Claire Jazz Ensembles, as well as various college percussion ensembles. He was the 2nd Prize winner of the 2008 International Jean-Marie Londeix Saxophone Competition in Bangkok and has won top prizes in many other solo competitions, including the NASA Classical Solo Competition, the MTNA Young Artist Woodwind Competition, the 2004 National Symphony Orchestra Young Soloists Competition, and the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra's Mary Graham Lasley competition. He was also a winner of Astral Artists' 2003 National Auditions and was a finalist for the Concert Artists Guild competition in 2009.

With a passion for chamber music, O'Connor was a founding member of the Red Line Saxophone Quartet, which won grand prizes at the Chesapeake, Coleman, NASA, and MTNA chamber music competitions, as well as gold medals at the Fischhoff and Plowman chamber competitions. Red Line premiered five new works for saxophone quartet and electronics on MATA's Interval Series in New York, NY, and released a CD on iTunes, "Back Burner." As a jazz artist, O'Connor freelances throughout the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area. He is also the co-founder of the Global Premiere Consortium Commissioning Project, an online platform for

instigating the composition, dissemination, and performance of new music worldwide. Find out more at [www.dougoconnor.com](http://www.dougoconnor.com).



### **OMAR DEJESUS JR., trombone**

Originally from Palm Bay, FL, Omar Dejesus graduated from Florida State University in 2014. He won his position with The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" one year after graduating from Florida State, while pursuing his Masters Degree at Yale University. His teachers include Ron Youmans, John Drew, and Scott Hartman.

Dejesus has been a multiple-event competitor at the International Trombone Festival and is the winner of the 2016 American Trombone Workshop – National Solo Competition. He now holds the position of Second Trombone in "Pershing's Own" Concert Band and enjoys freelancing in the metropolitan Washington, DC, area playing a variety of music in the local community and with professional ensembles.



### **BEN WENSEL, cello**

A native of Rochester, NY, Benjamin Wensel earned degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and Eastman School of Music. While at Eastman, Ben served as assistant to renowned pedagogue Alan Harris. Equally important to his musical education were performances in seminars and master classes for members of the Cleveland, Guarneri, Juilliard, Miami, and Ying quartets, chamber music studies with Peter Salaff and members of the Audubon and Cavani Quartets, and solo master classes with Clemens Michael Hagen, Steven Isserlis, David Soyer, and Michel Strauss.

Ben has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic, Syracuse Symphony, and has been a member of The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" Orchestra, Strolling Strings, and String Quartet since 2003.

Dedicated to the creation and promotion of new music, Ben performed the world premieres of more than 20 works written by established and emerging American composers as a member of the Tarab Cello Ensemble.

## PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES *(continued)*

### **BEN WENSEL**, *continued*

He also participated in the ensemble's residencies at Princeton University, Stetson University, and the University of South Florida.

Prior to his military service, Ben taught chamber music and maintained a private studio at the Hochstein School of Music and Dance in Rochester, where he was also cellist of the Hochstein String Quartet. Fortunate to have many avenues to pursue chamber music in the artistically rich National Capital area, Ben performs with the Mellifera Quartet, who recently released recordings with Delos and RM Records of works for string quartet and clarinet.

Ben lives in Northern Virginia with his wife, Christina, and their children, Juniper, Ellis, and Willa.



### **ZACK PRIDE**, electric bass

Zackery Pride, born in Louisville, KY, and raised in Atlanta, GA, began his musical studies on violin and switched to bass at the age of 14. He was awarded a four-year music scholarship from Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music with honors. As a student, he immediately excelled to the principal bass position in the Oberlin Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, and the Jazz Band. In the Great

Lakes region, Zack found himself in the company of and performing on stage with: Lou Rawls, gospel legend Dorothy Norwood, Jaguar (of The Roots), Derrick Reagan, Robert Shaw, Louis Lane, Robin Eubanks, Vanessa Rubin, Marcus Belgrave, Frank Morgan, and Flo Brown.

Zack then lived in New York, NY, where he expanded his musical education and experience, spending time under the tutelage of such masters as Buster Williams, Ray Brown, Lonnie Plaxico, Matthew Garrison, Peter Washington, and Rufus Reid. Rufus was so impressed with Zack's talent that he suggested he perform at the memorial service of the late, great Milt "The Judge" Hinton. Zack performed with the Winard Harper Trio, making history by accompanying Dave Chappelle with his first stand-up comedy performance at Carnegie Hall. A few of the other artists he's shared the stage or recorded with are: Joshua Redman, Q-Tip, Cassandra Wilson, Kenny Garrett, Kirk Whalum, George Cables, Cyrus Chestnut, Rene Marie,

Jimmy Ponder, Charles Davis, Russell Gunn, Eric Reed, Donald Smith, Wycliffe Gordon, Lizz Wright, Carrie Smith, Mark Murphy, Marcus Printup, Mark Whitfield, Stefon Harris, Freddy Cole, and Johnny O'Neil.

Zack has performed in nearly every major jazz venue in the world, including the Blue Note Café (New York and Milan), Jazz Standard, Jazz Showcase, Sweet Basil (New York and Tokyo), Ravinia Institute, the Hip Hop Conference (1999, 2001, 2003), and numerous jazz festivals held in Asia, Europe, and South America. His television credentials consist of performances aired on BET Jazz and VH1. Zack received his Masters of Music degree in 2006 from Georgia State University and shortly after joined The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own." He now resides in Arlington, VA, where he continues to record, tour, and create music with today's most talented artists.



### **ANNIE RAY**, harp

Annie Ray grew up in a musical family in Plano, TX, and began harp at the age of five, studying with Naoko Nakamura, harpist with the Dallas Winds and Southern Methodist University professor. Annie has toured Austria performing with the American Youth Harp Ensemble and has won national awards for superior musicianship with her concerto performance of the Debussy Danse.

She spent six years as a member of the Greater Dallas Youth Orchestras and appeared as the group's designated spokesperson on the National Public Radio show "From the Top," and performed alongside the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

Annie studied harp at the University of Houston with former Houston Symphony Orchestra harpist Paula Page, where she found an interest in performing with wind band. She went on to study with Dr. Jaymee Haefner at the University of North Texas and was a member of the UNT Wind Symphony, with whom she performed the Gliere Harp Concerto. Annie has performed with various ensembles at the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic and in February 2017 performed with the United States Air Force Band in Washington, DC, as a part of the USAFB Collegiate Symposium.

Annie graduated from the University of North Texas in 2017 and holds a Bachelor of Music in Harp Performance and Music Education. She is currently a strings teacher for Fairfax County Public Schools and was named Fairfax Orchestra Directors Association "Beginning Teacher of the Year." She also began the first Parent Orchestra in the state. Annie presents at

## PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES (*continued*)

### **ANNIE RAY**, *continued*

conferences and advocates for the mainstream inclusion of harp in public school music education. She gigs regularly with various groups in Northern Virginia, including the Loudon Symphony Orchestra and Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra and is the American Harp Society Washington, DC, chapter Secretary.



### **DAN CAMPOLIETA**, piano

Dan Campolieta is a pianist, organist, and composer in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. An in-demand collaborative keyboardist, Dan has experience ranging from playing continuo in Baroque ensembles, to premiering new chamber works by living composers; from playing with jazz and rock bands, to orchestrating and leading pit orchestras. He has produced two solo recording projects

featuring his original compositions, *Guided Imagery* (2012) and *Poems, Prayers, Images* (2018). His choral works are published with Hal Leonard and Galaxy Music Corporation.



### **JACOB HARPSTER**, percussion

Jake Harpster is a percussionist currently residing in Washington, DC, where he is a member of The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own." With a background in classical percussion, Harpster has been a member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Timpani Fellow for Aspen Music Festival, first place winner of Yamaha Young Performing Artists Competition (2010), first place winner of Mid-Missouri Percussive Arts Trophy

Marimba Competition (2011), and winner of the New Works for Percussion Project Competition (2017). Harpster was the featured Marimba Soloist of the Tony and Emmy award-winning Broadway production "BLAST" for the 2011-2012 international tour. With this show, he toured the United States, South Korea, and all 47 prefectures in Japan.

In the marching percussion idiom, Harpster arranges and designs for ensembles across the country. He has been on percussion staff for Santa

Clara Vanguard since 2017. Harpster has also taught at such programs as Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps, George Mason University Indoor, Center Grove High School, Marian Catholic High School, Victor J. Andrew High School, Coppell High School, and Thomas Jefferson High School. Harpster received his MM degree in Percussion Performance from the University of North Texas. He received his BM degree in Percussion Performance from Indiana University. Upon graduating from IU, Harpster was awarded the prestigious Performer's Certificate.

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### AUDIENCE SURVEY

