

# Lamont School of Music

## Lamont Composers Concert Series

**Sean Friar**  
Director

Sunday, May 31, 2026  
7:30 p.m.  
Frederic C. Hamilton Family Recital Hall



Robert & Judi Newman Center  
for the Performing Arts

## **Program**

### **Bel Astre Voyageur**

**Justin D. Nickerson**

Nora Cullinan, conductor  
Becky Moritzky, harp  
Alyson Rotman, Callan Tharnish, LJ Hansen, Mackenzie Laun, Alma Sejmenovic, Ashley Hunt, Bonnie Bour, soprano  
Tedi Corn, Kat Sheamansmith, Jay Evins, Cori Siekert, Elle Laikind, alto  
Nathan Janzen, Ian Henning, David Carpenter, Doug Warburton, tenor  
Justin Nickerson, Phillip Aleshire, Kevin Padworski, Jack McHugh, bass

### **Nefelibata**

**Ronan Caci-Kukelka**

Ronan Caci-Kukelka, cello  
Karalina Marae Coates, piano

### **A Sorrowful Fytte**

**Bradley de Lucia**

Maotong Yu, baritone  
Bradley de Lucia, piano

### **Miniature No. 1 in A Major**

**Alexander Quam**

### **Miniature No. 2 in D Major**

Alexander Quam, guitar  
Silvia Miller, guitar

### **Incarnate**

**Delaney Kottenstette**

Delaney Kottenstette, flute  
Gabby Gillespie, oboe  
Melissa Monjaras, violin  
Robert Nael, bassoon

**Please silence your cell phones**

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## **Brushstrokes of Blue and Gold**

Delaney Kottenstette, flute  
Leah Degenhardt, clarinet  
Alex Wong, harp  
Karalina Coates, piano  
Joshua Wyly, violin  
Baron Balfour, viola  
Molly Urbon-Bonine, cello

## **Daphne Vogt**

## **Sonata in 3 Movements** from **Grisworld v. Connecticut**

## **Leo Joy**

*Performers to be announced from stage*

## **Exit Beholden**

Drew Tilbrooke, tenor saxophone  
Karalina Coates, piano  
Matthew Sousa, percussion  
Adlee Demientieff, double bass

## **Emil Tellefsen** (b. 2004)

## **Careworn**

## **Emil Tellefsen & Drew Tilbrooke** (b. 2003)

Emil Tellefsen, classical guitar  
Drew Tilbrooke, soprano saxophone

## **Handbrake**

## **Emil Tellefsen**

Emil Tellefsen, classical guitar

## **bloom**

*Performers to be announced from stage*

## **Logan Dougherty** (b. 1993)

## **Shadows I: Sun Shadow**

## **Logan Dougherty**

Julia Ribeiro, oboe  
Chimera Cameron, percussion  
Joshua Wyly, violin  
Carter Saccocio, cello

INTERMISSION

## **One**

## **Alex Uhrlaub**

## **Rändajad**

## **Tim Norrod**

Joshua Wyly, violin  
Jaxon Cox, cello  
Kaitlyn Rosling, clarinet  
Jeremy Collins, flute  
Zoe Konz, piano

## **Trombone Octet**

## **Bradley de Lucia**

*Performers to be announced from stage*

## **Margate**

Emil Tellefsen, guitar

## **Rachel Hayward** (b. 2005)

## Text

### **Bel astre voyageur**

The first sounds in  
Bel astre voyageur  
are the first glimpses of the great comet in the night sky,  
and the choir, filled with wonder,  
asks these questions Ackermann wrote down years ago,  
pleading for the celestial wisdom this visitor may hold;  
where are you going?  
Do we have brothers,  
out there, in the cosmos?  
After the comet takes its leave,  
the observers are left to guess and wonder  
what the world will be like when it returns.

### **A Sorrowful Fytte**

Lo! I sing cheerily  
In my bright days,  
But now all wearily  
Chant I my lays;  
Sorrowing tearfully,  
Saddest of men,  
Can I sing cheerfully,  
As I could then?  
Many a verity  
In those glad times  
Of my prosperity  
Taught I in rhymes;  
Now from forgetfulness  
Wanders my tongue,  
Wasting in fretfulness,  
Metres unsung.  
Worldliness brought me here  
Foolishly blind,  
Riches have wrought me here  
Sadness of mind;  
When I rely on them,  
Lo! they depart,— Bitterly, fie on them!  
Rend they my heart.  
Why did your songs to me,  
World-loving men,  
Say joy belongs to me  
Ever as then?  
Why did ye lyingly  
Think such a thing,  
Seeing how flyingly  
Wealth may take wing?

## Program Notes

### **Bel astre voyageur**

In 1861, a great comet's orbit came into close proximity with the Earth's orbit, visible in the night sky to the naked eye for approximately 3 months. Louise Ackermann saw this comet, a comet that would not pass by for another 362 years, and wondered about the sights the comet may have seen on its journey, along with how the Earth would change before it saw us again.

### **Nefelibata**

Nefelibata is a Portuguese word; Meaning someone who lives in the clouds of their own imagination or dreams, or one who does not obey typical conventions of society, literature or art.

### **Miniature No. 1 and No. 2**

Two selections from a Suite of short etudal guitar duets.

### **Incarnate**

This is the first piece I've written with the primary purpose of giving my friends and I the opportunity to play together. I've had ambitions to write something like this for a couple of years now, so I'm happy it finally came to life. When writing this piece, I was considering what it means to embody your best self. Incarnate is an intimate piece with a driving melody.

### **Brushstrokes of Blue and Gold**

This piece is inspired by the song Vincent by Don McLean. You may hear pieces of his melody sprinkled throughout my composition. I wanted this piece to connect with people who see the artist beyond the art itself. Vincent has always inspired me; songs about the artist behind the artwork are rare, and that idea has always stayed with me. "Brushstrokes of Blue and Gold" is, of course, a reference to The Starry Night, but it also holds emotional meaning for me personally. I wrote this piece with the goal of creating a kind of time capsule of what I was feeling in the moments I composed it. I also wanted to experiment with new textures and instrumentation.

### **Exit Beholden**

A dry field extends toward the horizon. The ochre grass reaches up to your thigh and moves lightly in the breeze. The day is overcast, cold. Beside you stands a great oak with wind chimes singing delicately from its limbs.

### **bloom**

Written for the DU Trombone choir, bloom captures the beauty of springtime. When first prompted that I should write for a trombone octet, my immediate response was "Yes! I'd love to!" About a day later, I began to wonder, "What am I going to do with 8 trombones?" Why use 8 trombones instead of 8 bassoons? Or 8 bass clarinets? Then it dawned on me: trombones have slides, slides that can morph pitches easily.

While thinking about these slides, I went for a walk near sunset on an early spring night and saw all of the flowers blooming on a Bradford pear tree. Often lamented for their pungent odor, against the pinkish sky at sunset, the

flowers were stunningly beautiful. I began to think of the way that the flowers branched out from one another, filling up the space in front of me. Utilizing the trombones in cascading rhythms, with their pitches branching off from one another, I could abstractly capture the beauty of this moment. In the concert hall, all of these pitches can combine, creating shimmering sounds through their overtones of the harmonic series.

### **Margate**

Margate is a love letter to the seaside town in the UK I grew up visiting on trips to see my family overseas. The guitar attempts to articulate the peace and beauty of this coastal village.

### **Sonata in 3 Movements, from Griswold v. Connecticut**

The Sonata in 3 Movements, from Griswold v. Connecticut is both exactly what the name implies and something quite different than one may expect. The piece, written for any number of narrators, takes the very common form of a 3-movement sonata and interprets it through the lens of the spoken word. As the name implies, the text for the piece is taken from the landmark supreme court case, Griswold v. Connecticut, though modified to a degree of near unrecognizability. The case is perhaps one of the most important cases of the 20th century for its precedent in the protection of individual privacy it set, later to be cited in cases such as Roe v. Wade, Lawrence v. Texas and Obergefell v. Hodges. In use of form, textual meaning, and musical texture the listener is given an opportunity to approach one of the most historical and popular forms in music, the sonata, in a way that entirely changes how it is perceived. In the exploration of these factors, a piece of music is created that can on its own explore both the advancements of human rights and their obfuscation in the modern day.

### **Sun Shadow**

Sun Shadow is the 1st, and brightest, movement of the Shadows set. The other movements (Moon Shadow and Venus Shadow) use dimmer, more muted sounds to capture the faint light that those objects reflect towards Earth. The sun, however, burns brightly in the sky. It is what humans associate with shade (even being used as a clock across many cultures!). In the music, the glockenspiel captures the brilliance of this sunlight, while a frequently appearing irregular meter of 11 beats captures the 11-year sunspot cycle. Pulsing rhythmic figures in the strings solidify the regularity of sunlight, a nearly perpetual clock-like sound uniting the music.

## **Biographies**

Baritone and composer **Justin D. Nickerson** is most at home on the choral stage. He holds a bachelor's degree in vocal performance from Colorado Mesa University and is currently finishing his master's degree in performance and composition at the Lamont School of Music at University of Denver. He holds the arts as the most essential keys to connecting to others, and finds his greatest community in those he performs with.

As a singer, he is an enthusiastic performer, performing currently with the Colorado Chorale, the Lamont Chorale, and the Orpheus Pagan Chamber Choir. He has also previously performed with Central City Opera, Lamont Opera Theater, and several church choirs in the Denver area. As a composer, his largest inspirations are Verdi, Vaughan Williams, and Fauré. In his music, he explores the range of the human experience, ranging from basic emotions all the way to exploring concepts such as perspectives on death and our responsibility to the world around us. His music is a way for him to connect at the highest level to the art of others and explore their deepest truths.

**Ronan Caci-Kukelka** is a freshman composer at the Lamont School of Music. His style often blends elements of Western Classical, Rock, and Polka music. He has been commissioned by Ember Choral Arts, the Cayuga Chamber Orchestra Youth Orchestra, and the NY Association of School Psychologists.

In less than a decade of composing **Bradley de Lucia** has written over 350 original works of various genres and styles, from medieval canons to full-length horror movie soundtracks. His music strives for a combination of lyrical sunniness and methodical inventiveness. A staunch champion of tonality and classical forms, de Lucia grounds himself in thorough studies of music, history, psychology, and the philosophies behind them all in the hopes of retaining and revitalizing the sublime, consoling, and beautiful within the tradition of music. Growing up in Lacey, Washington, he taught himself how to play the piano and write music, making his debut as a composer through the Seattle Symphony's Young Composers Workshop, where three years in a row he received commissions and premieres of his chamber works. He also works as a conductor, arranger, and an active mentor for all things music for many throughout his community. Bradley is a Composition M.M. student and GTA at the University of Denver, with a B.M. in composition from the Berklee College of Music.

**Alexander Quam** is a composer and guitarist from Minneapolis, MN. He began his relationship with performance on the banjo, and began composing once classical guitar became his main focus. In addition to classical study, he also is the primary composer in the Minneapolis grindcore band Stone Harp. He hopes to use his degree in composition to enter the video game industry.

Having a penchant for language, **Delaney Kottenstette** examines lyricism through the lens of the instrumental, translating her connection with the written word through the medium of music. Experimenting in the world of winds and strings, she is creating a well-rounded body of works that feature unconventional and underrated instrumental combinations. Subverting

idiomatic expectations, Delaney presents a sound that is both fresh and familiar. Her compositional journey continues under the instruction of Leanna Kirchoff, Nathan Hall, and Sean Friar at the Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver. Kottenstette started as a flutist from Centennial, Colorado, and knew she would choose music as a foundational part of her life and career from a very young age.

**Daphne Vogt** is a Colorado-based pianist and composer whose work blends jazz and contemporary classical influences with emotional storytelling. Having played piano for over ten years, she focuses primarily on jazz performance and composition while exploring music as a deeply personal and expressive art form. She is currently studying composition with Sean Friar at University of Denver. Her compositions often reflect personal experiences, aiming to capture specific emotions and moments through rich harmonies and cinematic textures. Outside of music she is also a D1 curling athlete, a licensed bee keeper, and has a passion for the outdoors.

**Emil Tellefsen** composes groove-infused neo-romantic music shaped by his background in classical and commercial styles. Influenced by Caroline Shaw, Philip Houghton, and Sufjan Stevens, his work also explores microtonality, including compositions in 31-tone equal temperament. In summer 2024, Emil premiered two pieces at Longy School of Music's Divergent Festival. His string trio *Water*, released that fall, was praised by the *DU Clarion* for its "complete stillness or rapid movement... calm, grounding energy or an intense storm." His interdisciplinary projects span sound design and composition for video games, indie animatics, and a product tutorial for the tech startup GraphIQ. Emil also performs as a guitarist and vocalist in the indie rock band Rose Cold.

**Rachel Hayward** strives to create music that interweaves art with real-world experience and reflects the human condition. She is a two-time attendee of the International Summer Academy of Music and was awarded a special honor for her chamber piece titled "Apple Juice." Hayward is currently in her second year pursuing a Bachelor of Music Degree in Composition.

**Leo Joy** is a composer and bass trombonist from Dallas, Texas who is concerned with the intersection between modernism and the power of hundreds of years of musical tradition. Their work takes from a variety of sources including minimalism, neoclassicism, and formal understandings of musical meaning and syncretizes them into a unique blend that invites the listener to think critically not only about the aesthetics of the music they listen to but also to the structure that it takes and why. They are in their second year of a BM composition at The University Of Denver.

**Logan Dougherty** graduated from CU with degrees in Astrophysics and Music Composition. During his time at CU, Logan was part of multiple publications about jovian space plasma physics. His love of astronomy, mathematics, and coding extend into his musical writing as algorithmic and sequential methods are included in many of his pieces. He also loves film, videogame, metal, romantic, and 12-tone music, often finding inspiration from those genres. In addition to his studies, Logan is a member of a Progressive Death Metal studio project Obsidian Skies, in which he performs both piano and guitar.

## Upcoming Events

Monday, June 1, 7:30 p.m.

### **Lamont Jazz Orchestra**

Gates Concert Hall

\$5 for reserved parterre seats, or FREE general admission

Tuesday, June 2, 2:00 p.m.

### **Masterclass: Daniel Morris, percussion**

Room 130

Free admission to observe

Wednesday, June 3, 7:30 p.m.

### **Lamont Wind Ensemble**

Gates Concert Hall

\$5 for reserved parterre seats, or FREE general admission

Thursday, June 4, 7:30 p.m.

### **Piano Department Recital**

Hamilton Recital Hall

Free admission, no ticket required

Friday, June 5, 12:30 p.m.

### **Awards Convocation**

Gates Concert Hall

Free admission, no ticket required

Friday, June 5, 7:30 p.m.

### **North Indian Classical Ensemble**

Hamilton Recital Hall

Free admission, ticket required

Saturday, June 6, 7:30 p.m.

### **Bluegrass Ensemble**

Williams Recital Salon

Free admission, ticket required

**Full events list:** [liberalarts.du.edu/lamont/performances-events](https://liberalarts.du.edu/lamont/performances-events)



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