



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of Music and Theatre

Ben Carlson Senior Recital

Sunday, March 5, 2023
7:30 PM
Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall

Program

Saxophone Concerto John Adams (b. 1947)

- I. Animato
- II. Molto vivo

Ben Carlson, alto saxophone
Michiyo Nakatani, piano

Intermission

B.C. and the Miracles Big Band

Porgy & Bess - Medley George Gershwin (1898-1937)
arr. Bill Potts (1928-2005)

Strasbourg / St. Denis Roy Hargrove (1969-2018)
arr. W Scott Gwinnell

The Nearness of You Hoagy Carmichael
(1899-1981)

Ben Carlson, tenor saxophone
Kyle Spear, Bass
Mitchell Rueschenberg, Drums
Mike Giles, Piano

Reverend Jack Robert Washut

Special appearance by Nick Bahr

The ISU Fight Song arr. Michael Giles

Program Notes

John Adams is an American conductor and composer of contemporary classical music. His work exudes expression, unique creative ideas, and dynamism.

Saxophone Concerto was composed in 2013 for classical saxophonist Timothy McAllister. The concerto draws inspiration from jazz saxophonists such as Stan Getz, Charlie Parker, Cannonball Adderley, and John Coltrane.

A note from the composer:

“While the concerto is not meant to sound jazzy per se, its jazz influences lie only slightly below the surface. I make constant use of the instrument’s vaunted agility as well as its capacity for a lyrical utterance that is only a short step away from the human voice... It begins with one long first part combining a fast movement with a slow, lyrical one. This is followed by a shorter second part, a species of funk-rondo with a fast, driving pulse.”

This concerto mirrors my musical interests. I have a passion for and experience with classical music, jazz, and improvisation. In sixth grade, I decided to switch instruments from oboe to tenor saxophone so that I could participate in jazz band. Though primarily playing the tenor saxophone in junior high and high school, I gained more experience with the alto saxophone in college. John Adams’ *Saxophone Concerto* has aided my growth with the alto saxophone and classical music while also allowing me to engage with a piece that’s roots are anchored in the traditions of jazz’s characteristics and aesthetics.

George Gershwin was an American composer and pianist who wrote music for orchestra, jazz, and opera. In 1935, he wrote the groundbreaking American opera *Porgy and Bess*. This opera is famous for its cast of Black artists, focus on a Black community, and utilization of musical genres not before seen in an operatic setting. Iowa State’s very own Simon Estes is well known for playing the role of Porgy in the Metropolitan Opera’s premiere performance of the opera in 1985.

Porgy and Bess - Medley is arranged by Bill Potts for big band. This arrangement includes five themes from *Porgy and Bess* entitled *What I Done, Done, Done - Prayer - Strawberries - Honey Man - and Crab Man*.

My saxophone professor Mike Giles and I got the opportunity to perform in the pit orchestra of the Des Moines Metro Opera’s production of *Porgy and Bess* last summer. The experience of participating in a professional ensemble and production was so rewarding, and I felt it right to pay tribute to that adventure by performing *Porgy and Bess - Medley* during this recital.

Roy Hargrove was an American jazz trumpet player whose influence in the jazz world cannot be overstated. Roy was an extremely flexible musician. He utilized, combined, and explored a variety of genres including hard bop, hip hop, soul, funk, and R&B. He is also known for his contribution to the genre known as neo-soul, a genre of music coined by Kedar Massenburg of Motown Records that emerged from soul and contemporary R&B. The creativity and ingenuity of Hargrove’s style are well-showcased in his composition *Strasbourg / St. Denis* from the album *Earfood* (2008). The funky tune plays around with call-and-response sections and a melody that you will likely be humming on your way home.

Hoagy Carmichael was an American musician, composer, songwriter, actor, and lawyer. In addition to the jazz standard performed during this recital *The Nearness of You*, Carmichael also wrote popular jazz standards *Heart and Soul*, *Stardust*, and *Georgia on My Mind*.

I performed this chart with my high school jazz band during my junior year of high school. It was my first time performing as a featured soloist, and it was during a time when I started to really dig into jazz music and decided to pursue music education as a career. As a result, this song became significant because it helped me develop as a musician and holds sentimental value for me.

Robert Washut is an American jazz composer and arranger, as well as a skilled educator and director. Washut served as Director of Jazz Studies at the University of Northern Iowa and UNI Jazz Band One for 22 years.

Reverend Jack is inspired by jazz pianist and composer Keith Jarrett and is a gospel/rock chart that builds throughout to an energetic climax near the end.

Reverend Jack is another tune my high school band performed that stuck with me. The emotion and impact of the piece serve as a sort of musical culmination of my development as a musician during high school and my time at Iowa State.

Michael Giles is an improviser, composer, saxophonist, and educator. He teaches saxophone and jazz studies at Iowa State University. Mike's approach to both teaching and performing is vibrant, creative, and outright likable. His commitment to educating his students, hard work, and expressing himself is admirable and appreciated throughout Iowa State's music department and beyond.

Mike debuted his jazz arrangement of *The ISU Fight Song* at the 2021 ISU Band Extravaganza performed by Jazz I, where it made its second appearance at the 2022 ISU Band Extravaganza. This arrangement is a swung jazz interpretation of the ISU fight song with changing meters and an interesting chord progression.

You may know that I have been heavily involved in the ISU Marching Band throughout the entirety of my time in college. Being a member of the ISUCF V'MB has been an unforgettable experience. Everything from playing alto saxophone as a freshman at ISU to serving as one of the drum majors of the ensemble has shaped me as a person and helped me create memories and relationships that will last me a lifetime. I wanted to honor my experience at ISU by concluding my recital with this arrangement of the ISU Fight Song.

B.C. and the Miracles Big Band

Saxophones

Ben Carlson
Lydia Linch
Seth Watgen
Cole Clark
Evan Lyons

Trombones

Elias Vargas
Andrew Florey
Sam Hauser
Kyle Grossnickle

Trumpets

Samuel Hanson
Charlie Campbell
Moses Albarran
Trevor Averhoff

Rhythm Section

Kyle Spear - Bass
Mitchell Rueschenberg - Drums
Mike Giles - Piano

This recital is given in partial fulfillment for a Bachelor of Music Education degree.
Ben is a student of Michael Giles.

for more info, visit
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