

# CU ★ PRESENTS

2021-22 Season



College of Music  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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## CU Presents

### Digital Program

*Spring 2022*

#### Editors

Sabine Kortals Stein  
Becca Vaclavik

#### Designer

Sabrina Green

#### Photography

CU Boulder Photography

## AT THE PERFORMANCE

- Please refrain from using electronic devices during the performance. Feel free to view this program on your device at any time prior to the performance, during intermission or after the performance ends.
- Photography and video recordings of any type are strictly prohibited during the performance.
- Smoking is not permitted anywhere. CU Boulder is a smoke-free campus.

**CU ★ PRESENTS** is the home of performing arts at the University of Colorado Boulder.



The mission of the **University of Colorado Boulder College of Music** is to inspire artistry and discovery, together.



*The College of Music acknowledges that the university sits upon land within the territories of the Ute, Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples. Further, we acknowledge that 48 contemporary tribal nations are historically tied to Colorado lands.*

# Pendulum New Music

Annika K. Socolofsky, artistic director

Egemen Kesikli, production manager

7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 16, 2022

Virtual event

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## Program

### **where the other end meets**

MaXas

*David P. Landon, electronics and Chi Him Chik, electronics (as MaXaS)*

### **Untitled [wind]**

Nelson Walker

*Nelson Walker, supercollider*

### **Tough Guy Syntax**

Jessie Lausé

*fixed media*

—Intermission—

## **Motored Bicycle**

Spencer Stepanek

*~Nois*

*Hunter Bockes*

*János Csontos*

*Jordan Lulloff*

*Julian Velasco*

## **It's High Time**

Kevin Gunia

*~Nois*

## **The Sun's Spinning-wheel**

Max Wolpert

*~Nois*

# Program notes

## where the other end meets

*MaXas*

*where the other end meets* is a free improvisation utilizing electronic instruments. It is part of an ongoing MaXaS project that looks for the boundaries of what is considered to be “live performance” within the context of a remote performance practice. David is in ATLAS and Chi Him joins us remotely from Hamburg, Germany.

## Untitled [wind]

*Nelson Walker*

The wind blows from the west. It carries many things: nourishing rains, grey thunderheads full of ice crystals, the clean smells of pines and spruces, the choking ash when they burn. On Dec. 30th, 2021, the wind carried angry cinders and the sounds of sirens. The next day, it carried a blanket of snow and the stories of people with nowhere to return home to. Today, the wind still carries those stories, an augury of futures to come, if we let them.

## It's High Time

*Kevin Gunia*

The further I completed *It's High Time*, the less I knew what to say about it. My conception of the work changed greatly. I originally thought of the work as a gradual accelerando. Later, it turned into three dance variations at different tempi. The end product is one big theme and one big variation.

I borrowed one idea from an earlier chamber work, *Your Oasis in Space*, and took it a step further. Each instrument in the quartet passes around solos, with occasional tuttis, as is heard in jazz. While the language of the work is jazz-influenced, it does not pretend to be pure jazz.

*It's High Time* was written for ~Nois Saxophone Quartet for performance in February 2022.

# Personnel

Click or tap on bold and underlined text to view biographies or websites.

## **Annika Socolofsky**, artistic director

### **MaXaS**

MaXaS is an improvisation duo created by David P. Landon and Chi Him Chik. The duo began in Kansas City (2017) as a saxophone and live electronics improvisation duo when both Chik and Landon were working on their master's degrees at the University of Missouri in Kansas City. In 2018, after Landon moved to Colorado and Chik moved to Basel, Switzerland, the project had to be re-imagined within the context of an online medium.

During performances, audio is routed over the internet from one performer to the next and then fed-back again. Each channel of audio fed across the network is manipulated and mixed by each performer independently and, in that way, is without a "stage". Instead, it is rather more akin to two nodes in a feedback loop where audiences can "listen in" at one point in a continually dynamic stream of audio. Both a conceptual experiment and technical nightmare, MaXaS seeks to harness the continual stream of networked data to create fleeting musical moments that emerge from the chaos and then disintegrate back into them.

### **Jessie Lausé**

Jessie Lausé is a composer and saxophonist from central Kentucky. Their work explores the most ambiguous and campy aspects of popular culture and surrealism through cerebral and silly polytonality, subversive theatrical technique, and experimental sound practices both electronic and acoustic. Lausé holds a bachelor's degree in arts administration from Butler University. They are currently pursuing a master's in music composition at the University of Colorado Boulder where they study with Annika Socolofsky and serve as an instructor of music technology. When not composing, Lausé spends their free time watching *Rupaul's Drag Race* with their cats, Gubaidulina and Mr. Bear.

## **Kevin Gunia**

Kevin Gunia is a composer, pianist and educator. He has composed solo and chamber works, large ensemble music, and collaborative pieces such as opera scenes and works for dance. His work has been recognized through the New Jersey Music Educators Association and the National Association for Music Education, as well as through the Mason Gross Extension Division. Gunia received the 2021–2022 George Lynn Memorial Award. He has written for ensembles such as ~Nois Saxophone Quartet, the Ivalas Quartet and the Boulder Altitude Directive.

Gunia is currently a graduate student at the University of Colorado Boulder, where he studies with Carter Pann and Michael Theodore. He is also an aural skills instructor at the institution. He completed undergraduate studies at the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University, where he studied with Charles Fussell, Robert Aldridge, and Scott Ordway.

## **Spencer Stepanek**

Coloradan musician and composer Spencer Stepanek indulges in all musics, from concert bands to blues bands, from that found in video games. Stepanek is an active member of the Pikes Peak Blues community as a blues keyboardist, where she performs for eager crowds of all ages and demeanors.

## **Nelson Walker**

Nelson Walker (he/they, b. 2000) is many things: a composer, a multi-string-instrumentalist, a lifelong vegetarian, an improviser, a budding producer, a polyglot-in-progress and a lover of loose-leaf teas. Through his numerous collaborations with a wide range of artists and performers (including but not limited to: artist/filmmaker Marco Corvo, the Ivalas Quartet, oboist extraordinaire Grace Stringfellow, Brenton Weyi, ~Nois, Gary Grundei, the Carpe Diem String Quartet, Sean Flynn, the Denver Playground Ensemble, Emily Zalevsky, Playback Theater West and Jordan Holloway), he aspires to continually learn from the wisdom of those around him, and contribute what he may towards forging a more compassionate and just world. At the University of Colorado Boulder, he has been honored to study composition with Annika Socolofsky, Carter Pann, John Drumheller, Michael Theodore and Nathan Hall.

His music is motivated by the concept of vulnerability as a prerequisite for art, and the power of storytelling in creating and strengthening community.

Walker believes the key to a happy life is a balance of gratitude, self-awareness and humility, unconditional compassion for all living beings, an acceptance of the ever-changing nature of the world we live in and a dash of bitters.

## **Max Wolpert**

Fiddler, composer, and storyteller Max Wolpert conjures up monsters and myth where the traditional, classical and theatrical meet. Drawing from tradition both musical and mythological, Wolpert makes music inspired by stories from around the world. Whether built upon the verve and bounce of an Irish jig, the endearing asymmetry of a Welsh pipe tune or the drive of a Virginian breakdown, Wolpert's pieces are crafted with taut detail and a flair for the dramatic honed over years as a pit musician, conductor, and orchestrator for theatrical productions.

Wolpert's first viola concerto, *Giants*, wields the unsung hero of the orchestra to call up singing harps, dancing stormclouds, and a fiendishly ticking clock inexorably counting down to the end of the world.

His three string quartets, *Myths*, *Lid un Tantsn* and *Song of Four*, serve as pedagogical tools to introduce the classical musician to traditional forms and improvisation, and in performance bring forth an Irish war goddess, two enchanted ravens, a young girl with dreams of piracy and a ferociously contrapuntal chase through a twisting labyrinth.

Wolpert is committed to bringing together performers of diverse stylistic backgrounds and to colliding musical worlds at high speed. His collaborators include banjoist and instigator Jayme Stone, Grammy-nominated harpsichordist Jory Vinikour, fearless violist Brett Deubner, and Native flute specialist Leon Joseph Littlebird, and his work has been performed by the Colorado Symphony, Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, Bismarck-Mandan Symphony Orchestra, Musique sur la Mer Chamber Orchestra and Breckenridge Music Festival Orchestra, and at the American Repertory Theater, International Music Festival of Gramado, Brazil, and the Minster in York, England. Wolpert teaches at Naropa University, the University of Colorado, Dana V Music and Mountainside Music Academy. His work appears on Naxos Records and Yellow Sound Label.



## ~Nois

Founded in 2016, ~Nois (pronounced “noise”) has become one of the premier ensembles in the United States by combining contemporary chamber music and improvisation to connect with audiences in unique concert experiences. Known for their “truly innovative musicianship” and “raw creativity” (Cacophony Magazine), ~Nois has been awarded top prizes at prestigious chamber music competitions including the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition and the M-Prize International Arts Competition.

Since their founding, ~Nois has presented more than 90 performances in 20 states from coast to coast. In addition to their regular concert season in Chicago, ~Nois has performed on festivals and series such as Big Ears, the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival and the University of Chicago Presents Series. In addition, ~Nois is in demand as a guest artist and lecturer at universities and secondary schools across the nation having held residencies and given performances at more than 30 institutions including University of Southern California, the University of Colorado Boulder, the Manhattan School of Music, and Princeton University. For the 2020-2021 academic year, ~Nois was appointed as the Don Michael Randel Ensemble in Residence at the University of Chicago.

In 2020, ~Nois released its debut album, *Is This ~Nois*, as a love letter to the quartet’s home of Chicago, featuring music by composers with strong ties to the city and its vibrant new music scene. Hailed as “fresh and intense” (The WholeNote), the album was named among the “Best of Bandcamp Contemporary Classical: June 2020” by critic Peter Margasak. “If ~Nois’ debut album is any indicator of what is to come from the group, the genre of the saxophone quartet has a bright future on the near horizon.” (I Care If You Listen).

Dedicated to expanding and redefining the saxophone quartet repertoire, ~Nois has premiered more than 40 works including compositions by 2019 Gaudeamus Prize winner Kelley Sheehan and 2018 Guggenheim Fellow Tonia Ko. ~Nois recently partnered with the Kinds of Kings composer collective on the Afterimage series, a collection of concerts in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles and has performed with the Bang On A Can All-Stars, Claire Chase, Eighth Blackbird and My Brightest Diamond.

# CU ★ PRESENTS



## Upcoming events at the College of Music

*Event details are subject to change, but the CU Presents website will always be up-to-date.*

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College of Music

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

# Personnel

As of Jan. 10, 2022

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### Dean

John Davis

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Margaret Haefner Berg

### Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Enrollment Management

Matthew Roeder

### Interim Assistant Dean for Advancement

Micah Abram

### Assistant Dean for Concerts and Communications

Joan McLean Braun

### Assistant Dean for Budget and Finance

Carrie Howard

### Executive Assistant to the Dean

Lauren Petersen

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## CU PRESENTS

### Executive Director

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### Operations Director

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Skylar Pongratz  
Morgan Ochs  
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## COLLEGE OF MUSIC OPERATIONS

### Senior Piano Technician

Ted Mulcahey

### Piano Technician

Mark Mikkelsen

### Scheduling Coordinator and Operations Assistant

Elise Campbell

### Recording Engineer

Kevin Harbison

### Facilities and Operations Coordinator

Peggy Hinton

### Media Specialist

Dustin Rumsey