



Rudi E. Scheidt
School of Music

ON THIS BRIGHT MORNING

featuring

THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

Symphonic Band

William Plenk, conductor
Erin Duke and Wilker Augusto, guest conductors

FEBRUARY 27, 2024 | 7:30 PM

SFPAC Plough Hall

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music
Kevin Sanders, Director
College of Communication and Fine Arts
Ryan Fisher, Interim Dean

PROGRAM

AYO

Katahj Copley
(b. 1998)

ONE LIFE BEAUTIFUL

Julie Giroux
(b. 1961)

Wilker Augusto, guest conductor*

GHOST APPARATUS

David Biedenbender
(b. 1984)

Erin Duke, guest conductor *

ASH

Jennifer Jolley
(b. 1981)

Saxophone Quintet

Landon Riggins, soprano saxophone

Paris McCann, alto saxophone

Amanda Roesch, alto saxophone

Eli Wyatt, tenor saxophone

Mateo Navarro, baritone saxophone

ON THIS BRIGHT MORNING

David Maslanka
(1943-2017)

*In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Wind Conducting

PROGRAM NOTES

AYO

**Katahj Copley
(b. 1998)**

Ways to greet others:

Salutations

Greetings.

Hello.

Hi.

Hey.

Yo.

Ayo.

Throughout history, humans have found countless ways to greet people. Most of you have probably heard most of the terms above, excluding one: *Ayo*. Rooted from hip-hop and jazz culture, “Ayo” is a staple of the black community, but cannot be mistaken to be just another word - it is an embracement. It’s used to tell when something’s right or wrong – when something is awesome or simply too sweet for words. It’s used with your people - it is personal.

My *Ayo* uses rhythms and harmonies embedded from the Afro-Latin culture with inspirations from modern hip-hop groups. I take you on a journey of building, breaking, reformation, and celebration. We, the listeners, have the choice to choose what “Ayo” means to us personally, but we must first honor its beginnings. Thank you for wanting to be a part of my *Ayo*.

As a society, some say we have forgotten how to greet each other, so when you forget – here are 8 reasons on why it is and always has been a necessity:

It is a basic function of communication.

It triggers positive conversations.

It can make friends out of two strangers.

It is a sign of respect and courtesy.

It exudes self-confidence.

It helps us connect to people on a more personal level.

It has the power to change how we feel about a person or place.

It has the power to change how we feel about ourselves.

Program notes by Ann Wilson

PROGRAM NOTES

ONE LIFE BEAUTIFUL

**Julie Giroux
(b. 1961)**

One Life Beautiful - The title itself is a double-entendre, which in one sense is referring to the person this work is dedicated to, as in “one life” that was beautifully lived. The other sense is a direct observation concluding that having only one life is what makes life so sacred, tragic, and so very precious. This is an impressionistic work musically describing that condition. Shakespeare’s “sweet sorrow”, the frailty and strength of life, the meaning of what it is to truly live, *One Life Beautiful*.

This composition is dedicated to Heather Cramer Reu for her ‘one life beautiful’ that brought so much love and joy to our lives.

Program notes by the composer

GHOST APPARATUS

**David Biedenbender
(b. 1984)**

Many people use narrative to structure the way they listen to music. If a title or a program note does not immediately evoke a story, some will invent one to frame their listening experience. Video games—some more than others—also allow you to create your own story within the framework of a given world. *Ghost Apparatus*—a hidden network or force—is the soundtrack for a video game that exists only in my head. The narrative for this game is up to you. From the beginning, every note, every decision has a consequence—a cause and effect—that sets in motion a chain of events that cannot be undone. Every note, every gesture is part of a larger puzzle—these single points of sound come together to form something bigger. It’s not apparent from the beginning, but there’s also a force working against the music, against the game. It comes in the form of a melody that emerges slowly—just quick, dramatic swells at first gradually becoming longer and punctuated by low, loud pillars of sound from the low voices until, finally, the music melts into chaos and this force overtakes the music entirely.

Program notes by the composer

PROGRAM NOTES

ASH

**Jennifer Jolley
(b. 1981)**

I never saw snowfall as a child growing up in Southern California; it was more a phenomenon that I saw in cartoons or read in children's books. I did, however, witness my first ash-fall when I was in elementary school. I looked up into the clouded sky and saw specks of ash falling from it. Excited but puzzled, I looked to my elementary school teacher during recess and held out my hand. "Oh, that's ash from the wildfires," she said. At that time, I couldn't comprehend how an enormous forest fire could create a small flurry of ash-flakes.

Now I have the ominous understanding that something so magical and beautiful comes from something so powerful and destructive.

Program notes by the composer

ON THIS BRIGHT MORNING

**David Maslanka
(1943-2017)**

There are times of stability in life, and times of significant transition. Transitions can be upsetting, often provoked, or accompanied by physical or emotional troubles. They are times of uncertainty and unknowing, but also the times of greatest creative change.

On This Bright Morning acknowledges the struggle, and the feelings of pain and loss in times of transition, but embodies the pure joy of realizing the bigger life. *On This Bright Morning*, life is new, life is possible.

The following is from a Bill Moyers interview with the poet, Jane Kenyon, who suffered chronic depression, and who died of leukemia at age 48:

"Yes, there are things in life that we must endure that are all but unendurable, and yet I feel that there is a great goodness. Why, when there could have been nothing, is there something? How, when there could have been nothing, does it happen that there is love, kindness, beauty?"

Program notes by the composer

UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS SYMPHONIC BAND

William Plenk, conductor

Flute

Miley Jaimez*
Micayla Scott
Jorge Roque
Ty Gross

Oboe

Mikayla LeDuff*
Antoinette Conway

Bassoon

Charles Bridges*
Connor Lorino

Clarinet

Des Taylor*
Onyinye Igboanugo
Jordan Kyles
Eli Roy
Jaylon Williams
Kameron Walker

Bass Clarinet

Erin Moore

Alto Saxophone

Landon Riggins*
Paris McCann

Tenor Saxophone

Eli Wyatt

Bari Saxophone

Mateo Navarro

Double Bass

Aniyya Dent

Horn

Kelsey Pegues*
Tristan Bass
Steven Groff
Elijah Evans
Drew Wolfe
Breanne Tompkins

Trumpet

Benjamin Shaffer*
Logan Pack
Jacob Turner
Marshall Rambin
Jaylen Thigpen
Charles Langston

Trombone

Evan Green*
Mason Creekmore
Constance Robinson
Leslie Avila
Thomas Stehlik

Bass Trombone

Valerie-Rose Huggins

Euphonium

Ayden Bran*
Sebastian Santos
Dontavius Howze
Terrion Freeman
Kathryn Dacus

Tuba

Gabi Ramsey*
Reagan Nunley
Benjamin Shedd
Lyle Stephens

Percussion

Colton Renfrow*
Jesse Wickman
Daniel Padron Hoepf
Daniel Young
Tyler Dailey
Mia Perez
Kenneth Polk
Mason Threlkeld

Piano

Carmen Lemos Gonzalez

*denotes principal player

MUSIC BIOGRAPHIES

WILLIAM PLENK, conductor

Dr. William Plenk is Associate Director of Bands and Director of Athletic Bands for the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music at the University of Memphis. In this role, he oversees the UofM Marching Band and Pep Band, conducts the Symphonic Band, and teaches music education courses. Dr. Plenk also serves as Associate Director for Academic Programs, administering undergraduate curriculum and advising for the School of Music. Outside of the University, Dr. Plenk is active as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. He has worked with concert bands, marching bands, and drum corps from across the United States, Singapore, and Japan, including a three-season tenure with the Tenrikyo Aimachi Marching Band from Nagoya, Japan. Dr. Plenk has presented or conducted at the CBDNA Western/Northwestern and Southern Division Conferences, as well as the CBDNA National Athletic Band Symposium. Before arriving in Memphis, Dr. Plenk served as Associate Director of Bands and Director of Athletic Bands at the University of Nevada, Reno, developing the athletic band program into one of the most respected in the region. He received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting from the University of California, Los Angeles, where he was Conductor of the UCLA Symphonic Band, Associate Conductor of the UCLA Wind Ensemble, and Associate Conductor of the UCLA Brass Ensemble. He also received a Master of Music degree in tuba performance from UCLA, and a Bachelor of Music degree in tuba performance from Ithaca College.