

Hopkins Center for the Arts

at Dartmouth

presents

Coast Jazz Orchestra at Dartmouth

Taylor Ho Bynum, director

Warm & Coasty

The 44th Senior Feature concert

Featuring:

Jordan Jones '24, piano

Kirusha Lanski '23, drums

Amy Norton '23, trumpet

Mateo Oyola '24, baritone sax

Raegan Padula '24, French horn

Julia Picker '24, trombone and voice

Jayanth Uppaluri '24, drums and electric bass

Saturday, May 25 • 4 & 8 pm

Hanover Inn: Grand Ballroom • Dartmouth College • 2024

Funded in part by gifts from Friends of the Coast

Program

Approximate duration: 90 minutes

Nebula, featuring Amy Norton '23

Amy Norton '23

I'll Be Seeing You, featuring Julia Picker '24

Music by Sammy Fain
Lyrics by Irving Kahal
arr. Amy Norton '23

Nica's Dream, featuring Jordan Jones '24

Horace Silver
arr. Steven Feifke

Meeting of the Spirits, featuring Jayanth Uppaluri '24

John McLaughlin
arr. Jayanth Uppaluri '24

Twisting In (variations on a theme by Suffjan Stevens),
featuring Raegan Padula '24

Raegan Padula '24

The Curtain/The Clearing, featuring Kirusha Lanski '23

Michael League
re-orch. Amy Norton '23

Warm Rain, featuring Mateo Oyola '24

Mateo Oyola '24

Wolves and Blizzards, featuring all the seniors

Music by Taylor Ho Bynum
Lyrics by David Mitchell

Coast Jazz Orchestra – Spring 2024

Taylor Ho Bynum, director

Trumpets

Amy Norton '23*
Tucker Stone '26

French horn

Raegan Padula '24

Trombones

Julia Picker '24 (+voice)
Jackson Yassin '26
Nico Bezzerides '27

Flute

Jessica Yang '25

Alto sax

Devan Amin '27

Tenor sax

Ben Sontag '25
Eliza Gould '27

Baritone sax

Mateo Oyola '24

Violin

Gracie Kim '25

Viola

Elaine Chi '25

Cello

Daniel Lin '23

Electric and acoustic bass

Witt Lindau '27 (+drums)

Piano

Jordan Jones '24

Guitar

Bo Farnell '26

Drums/Percussion

Kirusha Lanski '23
Jayanth Uppaluri '24^ (+electric bass)
Damon Dewitt '25
P.J. Griffiths '26
Special guest percussionist: Amy Garapic

Tabla

Tushar Aggarwal '26

* Coast librarian/copyist

^ Coast ensemble manager

Special thanks to IIP faculty Jason Ennis, Amy Garapic and Michael Zsoldos
for their sectional coaching support this term

Program Notes

Every time I have the pleasure and privilege of performing or teaching this music, I am reminded of how lucky I am to spend my life dedicated to a practice that allows the collective to shape the direction of the music; that welcomes responsive and fluid leadership without hierarchy or fixed roles; that encourages non-verbal communication between a mélange of perspectives, backgrounds and aesthetics; and that asks us as individuals to exist in the present moment, do our best to serve the needs of the ensemble, and feel a part of something much greater than ourselves. I offer my profound gratitude to all of the musicians in the Coast (past present and future)—especially those joining us on stage for the final time before graduating—for being part of this experience with me. To Amy, Jayanth, Jordan, Julia, Kirusha, Mateo and Raegan, I trust you'll find the bright moments on your journey, and I hope your time with the Coast will help you hear them. Sharing the leadership of this ensemble with the students each spring is a tradition at this institution that I am proud to be a part of, that has resulted in fantastic collaborations for over 44 years, so for the remainder of the program I pass the mic to the seniors.

Taylor Ho Bynum

I wrote *Nebula*, my first composition, when I was 14 years old and a sophomore in high school. I'm now 22, and I'm writing an honors thesis focused on renewing my old compositions. To me, *Nebula* was the most obvious place to start. This piece had (and still has) so much sentimental value to me; I have fond memories of performing it in high school, and it won a state-wide composition contest. For a few years, I've felt that I could rewrite it to be a stronger and more coherent composition. My thesis is a preservation and restoration project—I ask the question, “How can I amplify and celebrate the ideas of my 14-year-old self while acknowledging my growth as a composer?” So, in Coast's performance of the renewed edition of *Nebula*, you'll hear much of the original material, but reorganized, edited and supplemented.

I want to thank Taylor for being such an enthusiastic supporter of my compositions and my musical journey, and I want to thank Dave Umstead, my high school band director and trumpet teacher and all-around musical mentor, for his lifelong support and for encouraging me to pursue music during the crucial years. I wouldn't be the musician I am without either of them.

I hope you enjoy *Nebula* as much as I do. It's been such an honor to bring this to Coast and to rewrite it with these talented musicians in mind. And the title, if you're wondering? It's borrowed from the name of an item in a video game that I was playing when I first wrote the piece. Yeah. That decision by 14-year-old Amy made it through the many revisions of this piece, and I can't bear to rename it something more sophisticated or relevant. In a way, there's no better way to encapsulate my younger self.

Amy Norton '23

Hi everyone and thank you so much for coming to our concert! My name is Julia and I'm graduating with a major in biology and a minor in music. I joined the Coast Jazz Orchestra in my freshman year at Dartmouth, beginning my involvement during the days where Coast rehearsals were held in a tent outside to minimize risk of COVID transmission. Obviously, a lot has changed since those rainy evenings in the fall of 2020, but my love for the group and my appreciation for the music we play has never changed.

I'll Be Seeing You, a sentimental classic from the American Songbook, was originally composed in 1938 by Sammy Fain with lyrics by Irving Kahal. The song gained popularity in the 1940s as it became an anthem for those departing for war and leaving their loved ones behind. The version of the song you'll hear today, arranged by Amy Norton, is inspired by the 1940 recording of Frank Sinatra and Tommy Dorsey, which combined Sinatra's iconic vocal style with Dorsey's unique tone and masterful playing. Both share the melody and interpret it in slightly different, yet beautiful

ways. I first listened to this version of the song during my freshman year at Dartmouth, and when it became time to choose a song for my senior feature, I thought this tune would be a great opportunity to explore the melody as both a vocalist and trombone player. It also captures the bittersweet feeling of graduating and leaving behind a place that I have grown to love so greatly.

Julia Picker '24

Nica's Dream is a Latin/swing jazz standard composed by the pianist Horace Silver in 1954. Originally dedicated to Baroness Kathleen Annie Pannonica de Koenigswarter, a patron to some of the jazz greats such as Thelonius Monk, Barry Harris and Art Blakey, this tune has been recorded countless times with innumerable interpretations. This specific arrangement was done by Steven Feifke, a modern jazz big band composer and pianist who breathes fresh life into any tune he touches.

I selected this tune because it served as one of my preliminary exposures to jazz. I still remember my first time listening to Oscar Peterson's version of *Nica's Dream* six years ago, mouth agape in awe at the masterful and tasteful use of syncopation, harmony, melody and blues. Steven Feifke's arrangement includes these musical aspects whilst also adding a unique modern rhythmic feel that, to me, symbolizes the musical maturity I've gained since those early days. In many ways, this performance and tune choice is a representation of my journey as a musician coming full circle. Although my tenure in the Coast ensemble has been quite short, less than a year in fact, I've derived so much pleasure from being able to share such a sacred improvisatory space with not only amazing musicians but amazing human beings. I want to thank Taylor and all of my peers for such a wonderful experience. Please enjoy.

Jordan Jones '24

Meeting of the Spirits is the first track on the Mahavishnu Orchestra's trailblazing album *The Inner Mounting Flame*, and it opened the album with a bang. The song is built around a simple two-chord loop and stepwise riff, but the five musicians take this riff and create an explosive, virtuosic performance. It was astonishing to the listeners who heard it in 1971, and it was certainly surprising to me hearing it in August of 2020, as the world turned upside down with a global pandemic. It was a song that helped me escape during my pandemic-affected freshman year, and it only seems fitting that I bring it back as one of the final songs I'll play in Coast.

Coast over the last few years has been a chaotic experience. My freshman fall, I would drag a drum kit on a cart, sometimes in the pouring rain, to a tent outside of the North Park dorms, where six of us would make weird sounds assisted by fantastic outdoor echo. That spring, we practiced in Spaulding Auditorium, wearing masks, sitting six feet apart, and clearing the auditorium every hour to let it "air out". Even when the pandemic ended, we weren't done changing rehearsal spaces, as the Hop renovation forced us out of the Hop basement and into the Church basement. We've made music without a full kit, without a full band, and then with multiple full kits and a full band with mbira, tabla (which will feature heavily on this piece!), bassoon and steel pan.

This has all taught me that Coast is not about the spaces in which we make music or just the music itself. More importantly, it's about the work of all the people making that music together. Coast has been where I've found my closest friends and shared some of my best memories. That feeling of togetherness is especially important for a piece like *Meeting of the Spirits*, in which the source material is quite simple. For this piece to succeed, it's up to all of us to listen and work with each other to take this piece to the next level. As we've proven time and time again, I know we're up to the challenge.

Jayanth Uppaluri '24

Program Notes *continued*

It's 2014 and I'm sitting alone in my childhood bedroom, saving my allotted skip on the free version of a streaming service to avoid the 25-minute-long closing track of Sufjan Stevens' 2010 album *The Age of Adz*. *Impossible Soul* is a song which, as soon as I developed the patience for it, captured me in its epic, somehow avoidant narration of the self and love through apocalypse, riddled with electrosymphonic texture that may well have been the beginning of the sonic road I'm on today. It's ten years later, and the song has remained in my pocket, its melody entangled and interpolated in spiraled thoughts, filtered through another decade of experience.

Following the tradition of free jazz artists like Ornette Coleman, I've taken themes from the first of the five sections of *Impossible Soul* and woven their folkish beauty into clouds, rivers, linen. The airy puzzle is grounded by two drummers in tandem dance, one forced into simple structure that acts as a backbone to the competing meters and the other only existing as a human delay pedal for the first. They breathe together, they play off each other. The melodic content, well-marinated from its comfortable seat in my heart, twists and turns on itself, copy-pasting, inverting, deleting, stuttering. The Coleman tradition of these melodies that are strong enough to sing through a mess of texture and harmony rings true and simple as the desire of the narrator in the original tune:

All I want is the perfect love
Though I know it's small, I want love for us all.
And all I couldn't sing —
I would say it all my life to you,
If I could get you at all.

Here, Stevens allows his narrator (self?) longing. I think there is something brave in that admittance.

I can't thank Taylor Ho Bynum enough for his guidance and energy through the past couple of years; if you know him, you know his passion for teaching (community)

and the music (community (music)) guide every action. I am very privileged to have a mentor like that on my team. Additionally, thanks to the other members of the Coast for engaging in new and challenging music, and finding a home in each piece we take on.

Raegan Padula '24

There's an ongoing joke among the members of Coast about the extent to which our beloved Taylor's aesthetic preferences profoundly misalign with the music of Snarky Puppy. Like many others in our band, I've been deeply inspired by Snarky Puppy's role in today's music. Although I've yet to find a way to pinpoint their sound on the ever-expanding graph of contemporary music genres, it's clear to me that Snarky Puppy is deeply committed to authenticity and creativity. They're quite distinct from the jazz tradition, but I owe them thanks for opening me up to jazz; without Snarky Puppy, my musical trajectory may have never led me to Coast. I thought it would be fitting to pay homage to Snarky Puppy in my final term at Dartmouth, as I reflect on my relationship with music over these past few years.

The two tracks I've selected, *The Curtain* and *The Clearing*, come from Snarky Puppy's 2015 Grammy-winning album *Sylva*. I chose these two pieces because both were intentionally written with an instrumentation similar to ours in mind. It's rare to find a five-man percussion, a string section or a tabla in jazz bands, which often means the charts we play in Coast must be heavily reorchestrated to fit our instrumentation. On *Sylva*, Snarky Puppy teams up with the Dutch Metropole Orkest, which indeed has full percussion and string sections!

I've had the pleasure of seeing Snarky Puppy twice in college. The second time was this term, with my fellow Coast drummers. Without a doubt, this has been one of my favorite concerts. In part, this was due to the incredible musicianship of the members of Snarky Puppy. But, more importantly, it was because I was

able to share the musical moment with my Coast drumming family—much like I hope we're able to share this concert with all of you.

Of course, Snarky Puppy's music wouldn't have been possible without the arranging genius of bandleader Michael League and the rest of the band. At Coast, we're very lucky to have our own arranging genius—many, many thanks to the incredible Amy Norton for all your help arranging these two pieces!

Kirusha Lanski '23

Warm Rain is an original composition and arrangement that I dedicated to this senior feature concert. Many of my originals are derivative of other works or are the product of collaboration between me and my talented musician friends. This one however, I wrote during the process of re-teaching myself piano courtesy of the oddly timed breaks of the D-Plan leaving me with little else to do. Though to say that this piece is purely original would be a lie, “great artists steal” and all

that. It takes inspiration from the band that fostered my love of jazz, the Count Basie Orchestra, as well as my musical mentors throughout the years, including Dartmouth faculty Taylor Ho Bynum, Michael Zsoldos and Dr. Rowland Moseley, and my earlier mentors Mark Weissman, Eric Vincent, Amy Collins, Brent Ferguson and David Daquil.

For *Warm Rain*, I pushed against my preconceptions of music and dived deeper into the roots of my inspiration simultaneously. I wrote the head with no greater picture in mind, the title came to me on a whim, yet I find the arrangement to be both gestural and intentional. Maybe you will hear some warm rain in the piece, or perhaps something else entirely. As for me, I just hope to impart this little token of what my experience has led me to so far. I'd very much like to see if you can swing along to the tune! Let the colorful harmonic choices wash over you and don't let the fake polyrhythms trip you up!

Mateo Oyola '24

About the Director

Taylor Ho Bynum is a musician, teacher and writer, with a background including work in composition, performance, interdisciplinary collaboration, production, organizing and advocacy. His expressionistic playing on cornet and other brass instruments, his expansive vision as composer, and his idiosyncratic improvisational approach have been documented on over 20 recordings as a bandleader and over 100 as a sideman. His past endeavors include his Acoustic Bicycle Tours (where he traveled to concerts solely by bike across thousands of miles) and his stewardship of Anthony Braxton's Tri-Centric Foundation (which he served as executive director from 2010-2018, producing and performing on many

major Braxton projects, including two operas and multiple festivals). Bynum has worked with other legendary figures such as Bill Dixon, Cecil Taylor and Wadada Leo Smith, and currently enjoys playing with friends in collective ensembles like his duo with Tomas Fujiwara, Illegal Crowns (with Fujiwara, Benoit Delbecq and Mary Halvorson) and Geometry (with Kyoko Kitamura, Tomeka Reid and Joe Morris), and as a sideman in groups led by Fujiwara, Jim Hobbs, Bill Lowe, William Parker and Bill Cole, among others. His writings on music have been published in *The New Yorker*, *The Baffler*, *Point of Departure* and *Sound American*, and he has been leading the Coast Jazz Orchestra at Dartmouth since 2017.

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