

Hopkins Center for the Arts
presents

The Coast Jazz Orchestra at Dartmouth

Whatever Floats Your Coast

The 45th Senior Feature concert

Taylor Ho Bynum, director

Featuring:

Tanaka Chikati '25, mbira, vibraphone and voice

Ben Sontag '25, tenor sax

Jessi Yu '25, cello

Elaine Chi '25, viola and guitar

Damon Dewitt '25, drums

Ryan Tabibian '25, alto sax

Daniel Gyaakye Amoateng '25, electric bass

Anaum Showkat GR, clarinet

Gracie Kim '25, violin

Jessica Yang '25, flute



THE
HOP

Saturday, May 24, 4 & 8 pm

Hanover Inn: Grand Ballroom
Dartmouth College • 2025

*Coast Jazz Orchestra is funded in part by gifts
from Friends of the Coast.*

The Coast Jazz Orchestra

Taylor Ho Bynum, director

Trumpet

Amy Norton '23^
Tucker Stone '26
Kyriakos Papasavas '28

Trombone

Noah Prescott '26
Jackson Yassin '26
Nico Bezzerides '27
Daniel Lin '23 (+ cello)

Flute

Jessica Yang '25
Crystal Ye '27

Clarinet

Anaum Showkat GR

Alto sax

Ryan Tabibian '25
Devan Amin '27

Tenor sax

Ben Sontag '25
Eliza Gould '27
Lamine Sao '28

Baritone sax

Victor Etuokwu '28

Violin

Gracie Kim '25

Viola

Elaine Chi '25* (+ guitar)
Audrey Evans '28

Cello

Jessica Yu '25

Guitar

Bo Farnell '26

Piano

Jordan Jones GR

Acoustic bass

Ben Floman '28

Drums

Damon Dewitt '25
Tushar Aggarwal '26 (+ tabla)

Mbira/vibraphone

Tanaka Chikati '25 (+ voice)

^ Coast librarian/copyist/house arranger

* Coast ensemble manager

Program

Approximate duration: 90 minutes

<i>Free!</i> , featuring Tanaka Chikati '25	Tanaka Chikati '25
<i>Applejuice Promenade</i> , featuring Ben Sontag '25	Ben Sontag '25
<i>How to Train Your Dragon</i> , featuring Jessi Yu '25	John Powell arr. Jessi Yu '25 & Amy Norton '23
<i>Days of Wine and Roses</i> , featuring Elaine Chi '25	Henry Mancini & Johnny Mercer arr. Elaine Chi '25
<i>Breathing Underwater</i> , featuring Damon DeWitt '25	Hiatus Coyote arr. Leif Harder '15
<i>Mercy Mercy Mercy</i> , featuring Ryan Tabibian '25	Joe Zawinul
<i>Amazing Grace/The Promise</i> , featuring Daniel Gyaakye Amoateng '25	John Newton/Andraé Crouch
<i>La Vie En Rose</i> , featuring Anaum Showkat GR	R.S. Louiguy & Édith Piaf arr. John Ferguson & Marco Pasetto
<i>Take the “A” Train/We’ll Meet Again</i> , featuring Gracie Kim '25	Composed and arr. by Billy Strayhorn/ composed by Ross Parker & Hughie Charles arr. Myles Collins
<i>Hypnosis</i> , featuring Jessica Yang '25	Ian Clarke arr. Jessica Yang '25 & Amy Norton '23
<i>Three (for Me We & Them)</i> , featuring all the seniors	Composed and arr. by Taylor Ho Bynum

Program Notes

As we’ve been rehearsing in a church basement for the past two and a half years (shoutout to CCDC for their gracious hospitality during the Hop renovation!), my students have heard plenty of my preaching about the ephemeral and spiritual joys of improvisational music-making, especially in complex times. So I will leave these program

notes to the voices of the graduating members of the ensemble: our dear friends Anaum, Ben, Damon, Daniel, Elaine, Gracie, Jess, Jessi, Ryan, and Tanaka, who have taken the lead in crafting today’s program. I remain profoundly grateful to get to share this music with such inspiring and inspired young people, and hope

the infinite fascinations of the sonic moment will always offer a place of peace and pleasure, encourage curiosity and compassion, and demonstrate an alternative form of collective action to aid them on their journeys.

Taylor Ho Bynum

“Live Free or Die”
Tanaka Chikati '25

Program Notes continued

I have very fond memories playing Nintendo games as a kid. *Mariokart*, *Pokémon*, *Luigi's Mansion*... trips to GameStop to buy the newest DS game, or unwrapping it on Christmas, or typing in some Easter egg code for some special game event, basically bouncing in my seat all the way home. More than just a fun way to pass the time, they became, for me, a key hallmark of that forgotten time we all know: that time in our lives when the hardest math was division and the weather was always nice and colors were much more vibrant. When the world stood so tall.

I always found a certain melancholy in them, a nostalgic pang, long before these games even became a thing of the past. Like an engrossing book, each game was a journey. Your journey, in particular: a scared, wide-eyed kid, stepping across their threshold into the wide world for the first time, getting swept off their feet into the great unknown. And as they got their footing for themselves, found out more about who they were and who they were meant to be, you were called to do the same, appreciating both the past you had lost and the future you were to gain. And when they looked forward, they saw their feet carry them to the excitement, to the big city and beyond, to the stars. And when they looked over their shoulder, they saw the humble homestead they'd started from—still equally as powerful in its own way. I wanted to write music that captured that hopeful nostalgia.

And, on top of that, I wanted to write music that was fun! What got me into jazz in the first place, was,

in fact, the *Mariokart* soundtrack. I'd listen to it over and over—and still do—and so much of it just entirely, unabashedly, rocks. Saxophones and guitars shredding to their heart's content. Drums just going off, and the whole band having fun. It is the big city, not at all separated from the humble beginnings, but truly big and exciting and hopeful.

In light of all this, I've been thinking about *Applejuice Promenade* for over three years now. Or, more accurately, I've been thinking about the idea of the piece, what it means to me, and the feelings it conveys, and had bouts of writing here and there. As with most long-term creative projects, it's now, more or less, completely unrecognizable from its original form, but that emotional throughline has always remained. And, through it all, writing it has been, without a shadow of a doubt, one of the best and most challenging creative experiences in my life, and I believe it to be worthy culmination of my experience thus far with music in general: stepping out of my shell, wide-eyed and excited, not knowing what to expect, but ready to embark. Ready to have fun. Ready to step across the threshold and get swept off your feet and have a blast. I think that's all I can think of, looking back at my time in the Coast Jazz Orchestra, and I truly can't say what I would trade it for. I can't even put into words the way that it's shaped me as a person. All I can do, and all anyone can do, is enjoy the music, and let that speak for itself.

So, tonight, I hope you have fun, and I hope that, regardless of

whether or not you played Nintendo games as a kid, our music reminds you of something dear to you that you'd forgotten, of the way you looked at the world when you were young, of the wonderful people and experiences—maybe lost, but not gone—that brought you here, on your journey, and to the exciting future ahead of you.

As they say in *Super Mario Odyssey*, “Oh, we can zoom all the way to the moon, from this great wide wacky world...”

Ben Sontag '25

I have always lived in two worlds. In one, I've flown with dragons, studied magic, and run through enchanted forests with satyrs. I grew up in these imagined places—stories where young people questioned what they were told, trusted their instincts, and followed courage wherever it led. These worlds didn't just offer escape; they taught me to look closer, to believe in possibility, and when needed, gather your people, sharpen your arrows and burn the Capitol down.

My other world is filled with characters less eccentric, but far superior. In this world, community isn't granted by magic, but built in the spaces between survival and solidarity. Made of flesh and bone, and full of love, laughter, and hope, they are my ultimate inspirations for everything I am, and truly what makes life worth living.

As my time in Coast, and at Dartmouth, comes to an end, I'm struck by a quiet regret: that somewhere along the way, I forgot how to dream. Caught in the rhythm of deadlines and

expectations, I let go of the worlds that once sparked my imagination. Now, as I leave college, I'm challenging myself to reconcile these two worlds again. I may never fly a dragon, but I can refuse to accept the world as it is. That's why I return to these soundtracks, scores from the stories that shaped me, not to escape, but to reimagine. Because music, like imagination, gives shape to possibility, and possibility is where liberation begins. The worlds we imagined as kids aren't just fantasies—they are blueprints. Futures we dared to dream. And it was through stories, through music, through film, that I first learned how to imagine them.

So today, I share pieces of the soundtracks that raised me—melodies from worlds that made me brave, helped me hope, and taught me to train dragons in the fight for a future where Dartmouth teaches Asian American Studies, and Palestine is free.

Jessi Yu '25

Wes Montgomery has become one of my greatest musical inspirations, especially in the world of jazz. It was actually in Taylor's jazz history class that I first listened to *Smokin' At the Half Note* all the way through and was immediately drawn to Montgomery's style. Additionally, I grew up watching movies with my family and was completely entranced by the soundtracks. This arrangement of *Days of Wine and Roses* draws from both Montgomery's and Henry Mancini's versions—two artists who deeply shaped my love for music. Throughout the piece, you'll hear

moments inspired by Montgomery's guitar phrasing and others where I leaned into Mancini's rich, filmic harmonies. While I usually play viola in Coast, I feel incredibly lucky to be playing guitar tonight on one of my favorite tunes, with some of my favorite people. As my first-ever arrangement, this project was definitely a challenge, but also one of the most rewarding things I have done and hope to keep doing after graduation.

Most of my musical background is in classical orchestras, so joining Coast initially felt intimidating, especially since the viola is not commonly seen in big band ensembles. But the kindness and encouragement I received, especially from Taylor, helped me feel like I belonged. Over time, this group has become a place where I have found real community and some of my closest friends. I'll always look back on our time making music together with a heart full of gratitude and love.

I want to thank all the music faculty who helped me fall in love with music again and again these past four years. I'm especially grateful to the mentors who supported me while I worked on this arrangement: Dr. Moseley, who first introduced me to writing for multiple instruments; Jason Ennis, whose guidance elevated my guitar playing far beyond what I imagined possible; and of course, Taylor Ho Bynum, whose joy and generosity uplift everyone around him. Thank you for reminding us, always, of the power of sound and community!

Elaine Chi '25

Damon Dewitt '25 will let the music speak for itself.

Thank you to Taylor Ho Bynum and Michael Zsoldos for being part of my amazing Dartmouth experience and helping me re-discover my joy of jazz. While taking lessons with Zsoldos, I learned to imitate the notes, rhythms, and articulations of my favorite jazz musicians to inspire my own unique style and sound. And, just like my playing, I will let one of my jazz idols do the talking here:

"You know, sometimes we're not prepared for adversity. When it happens sometimes we're caught short. We don't know exactly how to handle it, when it comes up. Sometimes we don't know just what to do when adversity takes over. And I have advice for all of us, I got it from my pianist Joe Zawinul who wrote this tune. And it sounds like what you're supposed to say when you have that kind of problem. It's called Mercy, Mercy, Mercy."

—Cannonball Adderly

(In addition to Ryan, Jordan on piano and Ben on bass, *Mercy Mercy Mercy* will feature two friends from Coast past: Mateo Oyola '24 on alto sax and Sam Beutner '25 on drums.)

Ryan Tabibian '25

"Amazing Grace" is more than a melody—it's a testimony. Written by English clergyman John Newton, this timeless hymn tells the story of redemption: a soul lost and then found, blind but given sight. As a Christian, this piece holds deep spiritual meaning for me. Tonight,

Program Notes continued

I present it through the lens of jazz improvisation—a form that, like grace itself, is alive, expressive, and full of surprise.

My love for music was born in the church. It was there that I first encountered the kind of sound that stirs the soul and invites something holy into the room. Jazz, much like gospel, gives voice to what words alone can't always capture. In this rendition, I let the spirit of the hymn speak freely—sometimes soft, sometimes bold, but always seeking. For me, improvising on “Amazing Grace” is more than musical—it's a prayer.

And this grace? It's not just mine—it's open to everyone. The grace of Jesus Christ isn't exclusive, it's an invitation. Scripture tells us in Revelation 3:20, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and dine with him, and he with Me.” What a promise—that the Savior of the world desires a relationship with us, no matter where we've been or what we've done. Jesus loves you. Come for His grace.

The second piece I'm performing tonight is “The Promise” by Andraé Crouch. It's a reminder of another gift: the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus promised would come to dwell in us, guide us, and reveal the heart of the Father. This music speaks to that truth—of comfort, of presence, of divine love walking with us daily.

I'm deeply grateful to Taylor Ho Bynum for his generosity and encouragement, to Professor Zsoldos for his wisdom and steady mentorship, and to Professor Brown

for always championing musical excellence and authenticity. Thank you for walking with me as I continue to grow—not just as a musician.

May these songs stir something in you tonight. Whether you came for the music, the message, or both, I pray you leave reminded that grace is real, and it's waiting.

Daniel Gyaakye Amoateng '25

La Vie En Rose stands as one of the most recognizable French songs ever written—a musical postcard from Paris that has transcended decades and countless interpretations since Édith Piaf first performed it in 1945. It's the song that plays in every Hollywood version of a Parisian café scene, usually right before someone falls dramatically in love or has their *Amélie* moment with a croissant.

As a Master of Science student at Dartmouth Medical School, I spend more time calculating p-values than perfect fifths. Yet there's a beautiful irony in playing music about rose-colored glasses while buried in medical journals—a contrast that brings balance to both worlds.

My relationship with French culture began at age 12 and ultimately led me to graduate with a minor in French at the University of Notre Dame last year. I developed an appreciation beyond just conjugating verbs (and occasionally horrifying professors with my nasal vowels). French became my intellectual comfort food—something I returned to whenever formulas became too dense. This arrangement by Marco Pasetto, a distinguished Italian

clarinetist, was thoughtfully transposed for clarinet by our own Amy Norton (the check for dealing with all my musical requests will arrive in 2 weeks, Amy).

This piece lets me step away from healthcare datasets and into the world that once captivated me in films like *Midnight in Paris*. Owen Wilson had rainy cobblestone streets and literary ghosts; I have the clarinet—maybe less cinematic, but just as good at bending time. In my own attempt to slip through time, this performance begins with primarily the clarinet and rhythm section before gradually welcoming more of the ensemble—a musical conversation unfolding as organically as the piece itself has over generations.

There's something uniquely satisfying about the duality of pursuing scientific knowledge while maintaining a space for artistic expression. In research, we speak of statistical significance; in music, we find personal significance. Both require attention to detail, pattern recognition, and a willingness to accept that, despite your best efforts, things often go completely off-script. Just as in medicine we learn that every patient tells a unique story, in jazz we discover that every performance reveals something new about a piece we thought we understood. As someone fortunate enough to explore both the analytical world of medicine and the expressive realm of music, I've found these seemingly disparate paths often illuminate each other in unexpected ways.

I hope this performance offers a brief moment where we can all see the world through slightly rosier glasses—a temporary but necessary respite from reality. After all, isn't that what both medicine and music ultimately provide? A moment of healing, a chance to breathe, and if we're lucky, a glimpse of something beautiful.

Anaam Showkat GR

Billy Strayhorn's "Take the A Train," made famous by Duke Ellington, was one of my first introductions to the world of jazz, and it's a piece that's remained close to my heart ever since. As one of the most beloved jazz standards, it's both iconic and deeply personal for me. The tune's infectious energy evokes both nostalgia and excitement, and written in honor of the new 'A' subway line that opened in 1941, it is a perfect reflection of the spirit of New York City (where, in just a few short weeks, I'll be hopping on my very own A Train!).

Alongside this classic, I included "We'll Meet Again," a song whose lyrics and melody speak to the bittersweet nature of saying goodbye. I wanted the two songs to drift into one another, like memories bleeding into the present, creating a medley that holds both celebration and reflection. As my time with Coast and Dartmouth comes to a close, the song's hopeful yet melancholic tone captures the emotions of this moment in time for many of us, acknowledging that although endings are hard, they always carry the promise of finding each other again somewhere down the line.

I came to the Coast Jazz Orchestra later in my journey at Dartmouth, during junior fall, with little more than a classical background in violin and piano. When I first joined, I had no idea just how profoundly this band and its people would impact me. Though initially timid due to my lack of jazz experience, Coast quickly became my refuge. It was the place where, no matter what else was going on in my life, I could find joy, laughter, and a sense of belonging. From moments of chuckling about how horrendously we botched a difficult rhythmic pattern, to playing some of the strangest tunes I've ever encountered, to even just taking a few breaths together to center ourselves before a performance—it's a community that's transformed me.

Being part of Coast has not only broadened my musical horizon but has truly been one of the most remarkable experiences that I could have asked for. I feel so incredibly lucky to have shared this journey with all my fellow Coasties. This medley is a tribute to those moments of joy, and a reflection of how music has carried me through.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to my family and friends for their unwavering support and love. To my music teachers, both past and present, thank you for nurturing my passion and helping it grow. And a special thank you to Taylor Ho Bynum, whose enduring patience, warmth, and belief in this band have made Coast a true community.

Joining this group has easily been one of the best decisions I've made, and I would choose it again in a heartbeat. As I move on from Dartmouth, I carry with me not only the melodies and rhythms we've shared, but the incredible people who've made this journey unforgettable. "We'll Meet Again" isn't just about parting ways—it's about knowing that the music, the memories, and the bonds we've created will live on, no matter where life takes us. Thank you all for letting me share this chapter with you.

Gracie Kim '25

I first fell in love with *Hypnosis* as a thirteen-year-old girl who dreamed of becoming a professional flautist. I had the privilege of hearing *Hypnosis* played live by Ian Clarke himself; I was instantly entranced and brought to tears by his performance. Clarke defied time and bent the rules of meter and pitch, traversing the boundaries of what I thought was possible on the flute.

When I first worked on *Hypnosis* in 2016, I believed music to be about playing all the right notes—to hit every articulation and every pitch perfectly. Music was a way for me to prove my worth, to show that I was capable. I have always loved music, as my safe haven, a world I can escape to. There came a point, however, when music became a cage, a constant reminder of my fear of failure and the exhausting, futile pursuit of perfection. I was frustrated, disillusioned, and lost.

It wasn't until my junior year at Dartmouth that I came to rekindle my love for music and begin to nurture my creative soul again. That fall, I found myself in the basement of a church, auditioning for a jazz orchestra with zero knowledge about jazz. I pulled out *Hypnosis* and played the worst audition of my life. And yet, to my surprise, Taylor looked at me and said: "Why don't you come to rehearsal tomorrow?"

Joining Coast was serendipity—I stumbled into jazz, tumbled and fell head first, into a whole new world. In this crazy, mind-bending alternate universe in the basement of a children's chapel amidst the middle of nowhere woods of New Hampshire, I learned that there are no wrong notes, no wrong answers to life. I learned how to finally get off the page and improvise, how to let

go of fear and trust myself, how to let the sun in and grow into my own individuality. Coast has turned my world upside down and I am immensely grateful for every second that I have spent as part of this collective.

As I've grown, *Hypnosis* is a piece that I have carried with me through every change in season and direction. This arrangement of *Hypnosis* is a collective reimagining of the piece I hold so near and dear to my heart. It is a reclamation of my love for music, the culmination of years spent on this journey. The first version of *Hypnosis* I ever performed was a soliloquy—a solo with piano. Tonight, I return to the piece in joyful conversation and in community with some of my closest friends, loved ones, and family.

To our very own "basement jazz coach," the one and only Taylor Ho Bynum, thank you for taking a bet on me. Thank you for your patience, for your unwavering support, and for bringing so much light and love and joy into our worlds. To my long-time flute teacher and beloved mentor Christine Cleary, thank you for nurturing my love for music and for introducing me to Ian Clarke and *Hypnosis*!

I believe in the power of music to heal, to reimagine, to create new worlds. I invite you to close your eyes and let the music take you away. It is my deepest hope that I can share the love and passion that music has brought into my life with you tonight. Thank you for being here and coming on this journey with me!

Jessica Yang '25

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 sideperson. 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 sideperson 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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