



COMMENCEMENT
CONCERT

2021

COMMENCEMENT CONCERT

FRIDAY, JUNE 11, 2021 ▪ 7:30 P.M.

Isabella Andries '21
Emily Austin '21
Aaron Brenton '24
Thomas Dubnicka '21
Daniel Green '21
Ella Kile '21
Frances Lewelling '21
Ethan Mellema '21
Emma Milton '21
Hung Phi Nguyen '21
Reese Pike '25
Ben Portzen '21
Ali Remondini '21
Earl Simons '22
Evan Stroud '21
Noah Vazquez '21
Jim Yang '21

- Sept Improvisations*, op. 150
VII. Allegro giocoso
Ethan Mellema, organ
Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835-1921)
- Makrokosmos*, Vol. I
III. Pastorale (from the Kingdom of Atlantis, ca. 10,000 B.C.)
VIII. The Magic Circle of Infinity (Moto perpetuo)
George Crumb
(b. 1929)
Isabella Andries, piano
- Sonata para violoncello solo*
I. Allegro moderato
Evan Stroud, cello
Leo Brouwer
(b. 1939)
- On the Sunny Side of the Street*
Dorothy Fields
(1904-1974)
Jimmy McHugh
(1894-1969)
arr. Ali Remondini
(b. 1999)
Ali Remondini, double bass and voice
- Between Corporeality and Consciousness 1 [For Deborah Hay]*
Ben Portzen
(b. 1998)
Ben Portzen, piano, electronics, and prepared guitar
- From *The Andrée Expedition*
XI. Anna's Birthday
Thomas Dubnicka, tenor
Dominick Argento
(1927-2019)
- Étude in C minor*, op. 10, no. 12 ("Revolutionary")
Jim Yang, piano
Frédéric Chopin
(1810-1849)
- From *Jagged Little Pill*
Your House
Emily Austin, soprano
Alanis Morissette
(b. 1974)

Toccata, op. 11

Sergei Prokofiev
(1891-1953)

Hung Phi Nguyen, piano

Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise

Sigmund Romberg
(1887-1951)
Oscar Hammerstein
(1895-1960)

Earl Simons, trumpet
Reese Pike, piano
Aaron Brenton, bass
Daniel Green, drums

From *Three Browning Songs*

Amy Beach
(1867-1944)

I. The year's at the spring
III. I send my heart up to thee

Emma Milton, soprano
Frances Lewelling, piano

Le Tombeau de Couperin
VI. Toccata

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Noah Vazquez, piano

Partita No. 1 in B minor, BWV 1002

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

I. Allemanda

Ella Kile, violin

Sonata in E Major, op. 109

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

I. Vivace ma non troppo - Adagio espressivo

Frances Lewelling, piano

STUDENT BIOS

Isabella Andries '21 is graduating with a Bachelor of Music in piano performance and is in the studio of Michael Mizrahi. She hails from Chicago, where she will be continuing her career post-graduation. In Isabella's time at Lawrence, she has married her interests in songwriting, music production, and composition with her skills in performance. This past year, she gave a multimedia recital titled *Icarus*, which was set to video projections. Her primary interests include contemporary and electronic music, which she has more recently been able to explore at the piano with her performance of Stephen Montague's *Tongues of Fire*. She would like to thank Catherine Kautsky and Michael Mizrahi for their guidance and mentorship throughout her time at Lawrence.

Emily Austin '21, a fifth-year student from Washington, D.C., will graduate with a Bachelor of Music in vocal performance and a Bachelor of Arts in English. While at Lawrence, Emily has been seen on stage as Isolier in *Le comte Ory*, Catherine in *Pippin*, Street Singer in Bernstein's *Mass*, Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Helen McDougal in *The Nefarious, Immoral but Highly Profitable Enterprise of Mr. Burke and Mr. Hare* and in many opera scenes and choir programs. In 2017 and 2018, she won first place in her category at the Wisconsin NATS competitions. She was awarded Summa Cum Laude honors for her senior recital film *Unpenned*. After graduating she will be starting a production company called *Stretch Your Eyes Productions* with a Lawrence alumnus and pursue a Master of Fine Arts in acting. Emily would like to thank her voice teachers Ken Bozeman and Esteli Gomez for guiding her through these past five years, and her advisors Copeland Woodruff and Karen Hoffmann for encouraging her to be creative in all ways while at Lawrence.

Born in Middleton, Wis., **Aaron Brenton '24** had his first performing opportunities playing bassoon in his middle school band at the age of twelve and with continued support from his parents, started taking private lessons and learning how to practice. Then at age 15, Aaron got his first bass guitar and started playing metal tablature to songs like *Wrathchild* and *Kryptonite*. Through multiple YouTube videos Aaron learned about Funk and R&B bass players like Victor Wooten and Michael League. Joining the Middleton High School Jazz Band and learning about jazz double bass from UW-Madison music faculty Nick Moran followed soon after. Aaron was the bass player for Middleton High School's Essentially Ellington

debut in 2019, the 2019 UW High School Honors Jazz Band, and one of two bassists in the 2019 Isthmus High School Jazz All-Star Band. All of this has led to his current place in the Lawrence Conservatory studying jazz double bass under Professor Mark Urness. Currently in his sophomore year at Lawrence, Aaron is an in-demand bass player on campus, a part of the Jackson Peters Quintet, his own group the Aaron Brenton Quartet Project, a solo bassist performing arrangements and original works with effects galore, and the bass player on Daniel Johnson's upcoming LP, *Childhood Sketches*.

Thomas Dubnicka '21, from Slinger, Wis., is graduating with a Bachelor of Music in music education (choral/general) and a Bachelor of Arts in theatre arts. During his time at Lawrence, he performed in six opera scenes programs, three theatre mainstage productions, and three opera mainstage productions: *Le comte Ory* (Cavalier and pregnant nun), Bernstein's *Mass* (street singer), and *The Marriage of Figaro* (Basilio). He placed third in the 2019 Wisconsin NATS Competition, and took his singing to Italy for two young artist programs. Not only is he an avid performer, he also stage managed ten opera and theatre productions including *Hydrogen Jukebox* which was the 2018 first-place winner of the American Prize in Opera Performance. His first year he sang in Viking Chorale and the next four years in Concert Choir where he was Concert Choir's 2020-21 President. The past three years he sang with Neenah First Presbyterian Church, and is extremely grateful to have been welcomed into their loving community. He would like to thank Alvina, Brent, and Larry for his work opportunity as a stage manager and recording technician for the Conservatory the previous four years, and a special thanks to Jen England and the Office of Admissions for the chance to work with them in many positions for all his five years. Thomas would like to share his love and thanks for his mates from Recess Loft and the class of 2020, and the countless friends along the journey; to some of the most fun and loving faculty he's had: Timothy X. Troy, Erica Scheinberg, and Massimiliano Verita (grazie mille!); to his mentors and powerful advising duo of Kathy Privatt and Phil Swan; to his conductor and metaphor extraordinaire Stephen Sieck; for the love, strength, and fabulousness from Copeland Woodruff; and most importantly to his voice teacher Steven Paul Spears for the many years of laughter and unfailing guidance.

Daniel George Green '21, from Orange, N.J., is graduating with a self-designed Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Entrepreneurship and Electronic Production. During his time at Lawrence University, Daniel has been a regular member as well as president of Sol Studios under the leadership of Brian Pertl, a member of the Lawrence University Percussion Ensemble and studio under the leadership of Dane Richeson, a drummer in jazz combos under the leadership of Matt Turner and Bill Carrothers, drummer in the Lawrence University Jazz Band and Lawrence University Jazz Ensemble under the leadership of José Encarnación and Patty Darling, percussionist in the Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble, and Lawrence Symphony Orchestra under the leadership of Matthew Arau, Andrew Mast, and Mark Dupere, a member of the Conservatory webcasts and setup crew teams under the leadership of Alvina Tan and José Encarnación, a drummer in on-campus bands such as B Lilly and the Sol Bros, MF Gritzz, The Jackson Peters Septet, and the Pitfall Trio. He also served as a member of the Warch Campus Center tech crew and Info Desk under the leadership of Greg Griffin and Jodie Bonikowske. He has been involved in Black Student Union, Sigma Phi Epsilon Wisconsin Alpha, and Lawrence International, to name a few, and has participated as a Study Abroad Scholar in the entrepreneurship and communications programs in Milan, Italy. Daniel would like to thank every organization and member of the Lawrence community, named and unnamed, such as students, staff, and faculty who have made his memorable experience worthwhile. His advisors are Alison Guenther-Pal and José Encarnación, and he has spent time counseled by Imelda Gledhill of the Center for Academic Success.

Marcella Kile '21 will be graduating with a Bachelor of Music in violin performance. Marcella is originally from Minneapolis, Minn. and started violin at the age of six. She is proud to say she studied with Professor Samantha George and thanks her for all the amazing experiences and lessons learned, in and out of the violin. Marcella has enjoyed being able to perform with the Lawrence Symphony Orchestra, the opera's production of *The Marriage of Figaro*, and recently collaborated in Viking Chorale's recording for their graduating seniors. She has also been honored to collaborate with so many other Lawrence musicians in a plethora of chamber ensembles. Through chamber collaboration, Marcella has participated in Lawrence University's program Music for All, which specializes in musical outreach and performance at local Appleton elementary schools. Marcella's work with children and special education

in schools and summer camps aspires her to pursue a career in music therapy. In the fall, Marcella will be starting her master's degree in violin performance at the University of Delaware where she was accepted to work alongside and study under Professor Gao. She loves camping and spending time with her rocking family, supportive partner, and two magnificent dogs.

Frances Lewelling '21, from the studio of Michael Mizrahi, will be graduating with a Bachelor of Music in piano performance. She grew up in Abu Dhabi, UAE, and spent two years at Interlochen Arts Academy, Mich. She has loved exploring opera as a rehearsal pianist for Spring Scenes 2018 (*Cendrillon*, Massenet), Spring Scenes 2019 (*Gianni Schicchi*, Puccini), and Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* (2020). She has sung and played with Cantala and Concert Choir and has loved preparing recitals with Lawrence vocalists. Aside from playing piano, Frances enjoys running, writing, and swimming, and misses cooking with her friends in McCarthy co-op! She is so grateful for the support of her family and friends this year and for Michael Mizrahi's guidance and unswerving faith in her abilities.

Ethan Mellema '21, a native of Park Ridge, Ill., is graduating with a Bachelor of Music in organ performance and a minor in art history, having studied organ with Daniel Schwandt, Kathrine Handford, and Bruce Bengtson while at Lawrence. During his time at Lawrence, Ethan has collaborated with several of the large ensembles including Concert Choir, Wind Ensemble, and the Lawrence Symphony Orchestra, playing the organ in performances of Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, Ottorino Respighi's *Pines of Rome*, and David Maslanka's *Symphony No. 4*. Ethan has also collaborated with a number of string players on both organ and harpsichord. A major highlight of his time at Lawrence was the organ studio's study abroad trip to France over spring break in March 2019. While in France, Ethan had the opportunity to play a number of French classic and symphonic organs at places such as the Royal Chapel of Versailles, La Madeleine in Paris, St. Ouen Abbey in Rouen, amongst others. He has also had opportunities to play in master classes for organists including Bine Bryndorf, Jean-Baptiste Robin and Frédéric Blanc. Ethan has also performed in a couple of organ recital series, including Appleton's summer Lunchtime Organ Recital Series. Away from Lawrence, he has served as choir collaborative keyboardist and assistant organist at First English Lutheran Church in Appleton, and has been a

regular substitute musician at Lutheran and Episcopal churches in both the Fox Valley, Wis. and Chicagoland areas. Ethan is the recipient of the Miriam Clapp Duncan Award in Organ and Harpsichord Literature and the LaVahn Maesch Prize in Organ. He is also the recipient of the Jessie Mae Pate McConagha Prize for interdisciplinary scholarship between art history and the humanities. When he's not at the organ, Ethan enjoys bicycling, cooking, reading, going to museums and spending time with family and friends.

Emma Milton '21, from Muskego, Wis., will be graduating with a Bachelor of Music in music education. During her time at Lawrence, she has studied voice in the studios of Joanne Bozeman and Esteli Gomez. She's enjoyed performing in operas including *The Nefarious, Immoral, but Highly Profitable Enterprise of Mr. Burke and Mr. Hare* (Madge), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Susanna), and Bernstein's *Mass*. She has also performed in opera scenes from *Die Fledermaus* (Rosalinde, 2018) and *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Fortuna, 2019). She placed second in the Wisconsin NATS competition in 2018. She has sung in Cantata and Concert Choir and currently serves as the assistant director for Viking Chorale. She has also served as a choral scholar at All Saint's Episcopal Church as well as First Congregational Church of Appleton. She has been recognized for her work in reimagining the choral classroom for radical inclusion as a presenter at the annual Harrison Symposium and recipient of the Paul C. Hollinger Award in Music History. Next fall, Emma will be student teaching in Appleton and Oshkosh, in both elementary general music and high school choir. She would like to thank her family, friends, teachers, and Lawrence professors for supporting and guiding her toward becoming the best musician, teacher, and life-long learner she can be.

Hung Phi Nguyen '21, a graduating senior, is a pianist full of energy, charm, and humor. A native of Vietnam, he started to play the piano at the young age of four. Studying under Catherine Kautsky, an incredibly passionate pedagogue and a fierce musician, Hung has been fearless in regard to repertoire, tackling and surmounting challenges galore, and has placed highly in competitions such as the second-place winner of the Lawrence Symphony Orchestra's concerto competition (2020), the winner of Wisconsin MTNA Competition (2019), and second place in the first Steinway Competition in Wisconsin (2018), to name a few. Hung was also the recipient of the Margaret Gary Daniels Award for his excellence in both solo performance and collaborative work at Lawrence. Besides his

passion for classical music, he loves to study different cultures and languages and has a minor in anthropology. This summer, he is going to Chautauqua and Bowdoin music festivals on full scholarship and will soon be off to Eastman School of Music to pursue his graduate studies in piano performance.

Reese Pike '25 is a first-year student studying piano performance in the studios of Catherine Kautsky and Bill Carrothers. A double-degree student, she is also interested in majoring in biology or history. In her first year at Lawrence, Reese has enjoyed being in jazz combo, chamber ensemble, and playing clarinet in Wind Ensemble. One of her favorite experiences of the year has been playing with the Jackson Peters Septet. She loves exploring all kinds of music, from jazz to classical to musical theatre. Reese is looking forward to even more opportunities for live music in her future at Lawrence.

Benjamin Portzen '21 is a composer and improviser making work in both sound and dance. Central to his practice is a deep-seated interest in the experience of art through time – how participation through witnessing or performing suspends us in the moment, interacts with our memory, and reveals new modes of experience. Through the creation of complex forms, electronic manipulation of sound/sight, and a commitment to patience, Ben's works embody a creative practice rooted in meditation, deep listening, and compassion. As a performer, Ben strives for truly collaborative processes from commission to performance, using creative programming as a tool for forging new meanings. Ben is graduating with a Bachelor of Music in composition. His primary mentors include Asha Srinivasan, Joanne Metcalf, Margaret Paek, and Matt Turner. Upon graduating, Ben will embark on a Watson Fellowship to explore the relationship between art and the unknown.

Ali Remondini '21 is a double bass performance major from the studio of Mark Urness. During her time at Lawrence, she has been a member of the Lawrence Symphony Orchestra, Jazz Band, Jazz Ensemble, Kinkaviwo (Ghanaian drumming and dance), Sambistas, Tambo Toké (Afro-Cuban Ensemble), Viking Chorale, jazz combos, has performed with various chamber ensembles, and played in the pit for *The Marriage of Figaro*. In addition to performing, Ali is passionate about music education and arts advocacy. She was a camp counselor at Birch Creek Music Academy and has enjoyed performing, teaching, and sharing her love of music at local

elementary schools. This past year, she was the Jazz and Improvisation representative on the Dean's Advisory Council and president of the women's music fraternity, Sigma Alpha Iota. After graduation, Ali is moving to Montreal, Québec to pursue a Master of Music in double bass performance at McGill University. She would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to her family, friends, and professor extraordinaire, Mark Urness, for their constant love and support.

Earl Simons, Jr. '22, from Queens, N.Y., is a junior majoring in government and minoring in Japanese language. He is interested in exploring how communities, both domestic and international, can interact and come together to influence, encourage development, and foster creativity with one another. This, however, does not dull his passion and love for jazz. Earl has been playing the trumpet for 11 years and continued his passions at Lawrence University by joining the Lawrence University Jazz Ensemble, small combos, and receiving private lessons from Professor John Daniel. He has also performed at Lawrence's *Be the Light* Campaign for two years. As he studies abroad in Japan next academic year, he hopes to explore both music and government as he learns more about the world. He plans to continue playing jazz in Japan and see what opportunities await him there.

Evan Stroud '21, from Milwaukee, Wis., is a biochemistry and cello performance major studying under the direction of Professor Horacio Contreras. During his time at Lawrence, Evan has focused his music studies on unconventional repertoire, performing various works by Latin American composers. He has continued this work by contributing to his professor's Sphinx Catalog of Latin American Composers by researching and creating biographies of underrepresented composers. With his involvement in the Lawrence Symphony Orchestra, the opera production of *The Marriage of Figaro* and various chamber groups, he has thoroughly enjoyed his collaboration with other musicians. Following a two-year gap year in Delaware with his partner, Evan hopes to begin his journey in the medical field, wanting to work in pediatric care and working with minority populations.

Noah Vazquez '21, from Zurich, Switzerland, is graduating with a Bachelor of Music in piano performance with a collaborative emphasis. As an Accompanying Fellow, Noah has enjoyed being a part of numerous collaborative projects during his time at Lawrence, serving as a pianist for the opera productions of *Gianni Schicchi* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, playing and singing in Concert Choir, working on chamber music outreach projects through Music for All, and accompanying various vocal and instrumental student recitals. He has performed in various master classes, both as a soloist and collaborator, and was awarded the Presser Undergraduate Award in 2020 for his outstanding collaborative contributions to the Conservatory. This fall, Noah will be pursuing a Master of Music in collaborative piano at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM). Noah would like to thank everyone, both faculty and friends, who has been so central to him pursuing his passion for collaboration and creating such meaningful musical experiences over the last four years. Special thanks go to his piano teacher Catherine Kautsky, and voice teacher Steven Paul Spears for their ardent support and mentorship, and meaningful friendship throughout his time at Lawrence.

Jim Yang '21, from Happy Valley, Ore., will be graduating with a double degree in piano performance and environmental studies. During his sophomore year, he founded the Lawrence University Environmental Organization, and led the organization in establishing compost services in all of the major residence halls as well as some academic buildings including the Conservatory, in addition to providing residence halls with battery recycling and electronics recycling services. Furthermore, through educational signage, petitions, and surveys, and gaining support from LUCC and Bon Appetit, Jim, with the support of the LU Environmental Organization, was able to get Bon Appetit to replace plastic bags with paper bags and reusable bags in the Corner Store. Other campaigns that he worked on with the club included successfully replacing paper boats for dine-in orders with reusable plates in the Cafe as well as getting "These Come from Trees" stickers onto paper towel dispensers across campus. A campaign that he worked on with the club but was stymied due to the pandemic was to get rid of paper towels in the residence halls (with exceptions) and provide students with hand towels through educational signage, petitions, and surveys. His musical endeavors included performing a piece he commissioned by Lawrence alumnus Nic Bizub for bass voice and piano on his senior recital with John T. Gates from the

voice faculty with whom he got to know through his accompanying work with bass vocalist Baron Lam. Jim wrote the text to the piece, which speaks of his experience walking home from school during his junior year of high school and breathing in diesel exhaust fumes coming from the vehicles on the busy street, which became the turning point in his life that led him to do work for the environment. He wishes to continue his work as a soloist, accompanist, and chamber musician as well as his work for the environment during his time at Lawrence and beyond. Jim would like to thank his piano professor, Cathy Kautsky, and his chamber coach, Professor Wen-Lei Gu, as well as all of his other professors at Lawrence for their guidance and wisdom.