

**The University of Southern Mississippi
College of Arts and Sciences
School of Music**

presents

Matthew James, saxophone

with

Zhaolei Xie, piano

Saturday, April 23rd, 2022
The Intermezzo in the Woods Gallery
8:00 p.m.

Tadj (1992-1994)

Christian Lauba
(b. 1952)

Lyrics Pieces, No. 6 (1896)
Wedding Day at Troldhaugen

Edvard Grieg
(1843-1907)
Arr. Nicki Roman

Brief Pause

Sonata (1984)

- I. Two Part Invention
- II. La Follia nuova: a lament for George Cacioppo
- III. Scherzo "Will o' the wisp"
- IV. Recitative and Dance

William Albright
(1944-1998)

Matthew James is a student of Dr. Dannel Espinoza.

Program Notes

Tadj

Tadj opens the second book of Christian Lauba's *Nine Studies*, the first and only one for solo soprano saxophone. Its title refers to Tajikistan, a country in Central Asia, whose people, the Tajiks, and language, trace their roots back to Iran, in contrast to neighboring countries. Christian Lauba does not wish to imitate a Tajik music in this study; it is only a poetic and geographical reference. As a crossroads between Asia, the Middle East and Russia, its culture and music are mixed by time and many influences that have shaped them.

The soprano, with its straight and conical pipe, and its simple reed, shares the same sound qualities as many other traditional instruments: the Hungarian taragote, the Chinese guanzi, or the bagpipes. It is therefore an instrument that can be very full of cultural references that Lauba wishes to exploit in Tadj

Lyrics Pieces, No. 6: Wedding Day at Trolldhaugen

Edvard Grieg's *Wedding Day at Trolldhaugen* is one of several short pieces in his collection of "Lyric Pieces" for solo piano. Composed in 1896, this work was premiered as a memorial to his 25th wedding anniversary with his wife Nina. The piece is simple in form, featuring a march-like opening, a lyrical middle section, and a return to the opening theme. This arrangement was done in order to continue to expand the soprano saxophone repertoire. It features only a few altissimo pitches and is very accessible for an intermediate performer.

Sonata

Albright's *Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano* was composed under a National Endowment for the Arts, and was written for a group of three saxophonist-pianist duos: Laura Hunter and Brian Connelly, Donald Sinta and Ellen Weckler, and Joseph Wytko and Walter Cosand and was premiered by Sinta and Weckler in 1984 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Like Albright's catalogue of music, his *Sonata* explores "one primary musical idea or mood in each ... movement within a multi-movement composition." This makes the piece very eclectic and diverse across the four movements. The titles reflect this diversity and Albright's fascination with the use of old compositional styles and forms. Movement one is a two-part invention, movement two a chaconne, movement three a scherzo, and movement four a recitative and dance. These neo-baroque characteristics are interpreted with Albright's modern musical vocabulary and juxtaposed to create expressive contrast that simultaneously references the past and calls in the future.