

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY
WIND SYMPHONY

in Concert

“Connections”

Dr. Thomas McCauley, *conductor*

with special guests

Zzyzx Quartet, *soloists*

ALEXANDER KASSER THEATER

Friday, December 13, 2024

7:30pm



Daniel Gurskis
Dean, College of the Arts

Anthony Mazzocchi
Director
John J. Cali School of Music

John J. Cali
School of Music

MONTCLAIR
STATE UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM

Soul to Soul

Nicholas Mossa, graduate student conductor

Quinn Mason

Concerto for Saxophone Quartet and Wind Ensemble

III. Dramatic/motivic

David Maslanka

Zzyzx Quartet, soloists

Come Sunday

I. Testimony

II. Shout!

Omar Thomas

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 8

I. moderate / very fast

II. moderate

III. moderate / very fast / moderate / very fast

David Maslanka

The Montclair State University Wind Symphony

Dr. Thomas McCauley, conductor

Soul to Soul

Composed in 2017 and revised in 2019 to pay homage to composer David Maslanka, “Soul to Soul” premiered by Purdue University Symphonic Band under the direction of Dr. Jonathan Sweet. As its creator explained, “*Soul to Soul is an elegy for wind ensemble written in the memory of David Maslanka (1943-2017), who I had the pleasure of working closely with for a brief period in February 2017. The work is a tribute to Dr. Maslanka and his unique style of writing for wind ensemble, complete with chorales and hopeful trumpet fanfares. In addition to the chorales, this piece also contains a quote from his 8th symphony.*”

Based in Dallas, Texas, composer and conductor Quinn Mason (b. 1996) previously served as the Hartford Symphony Orchestra’s Artist in Residence. His orchestral music has been commissioned and performed by over 170 orchestras in the US and Europe, including by the San Francisco Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Utah Symphony, in Europe by the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI and many more. He has received numerous awards from the American Composers Forum, ASCAP Voices of Change, and was also named as a finalist for 2020’s Texan of the Year. As a conductor, he has worked with Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Marin Alsop, Gerard Schwarz, and Miguel Harth-Bedoya, and has guest conducted many orchestras around the country, including the National Symphony Orchestra and West Virginia Symphony Orchestra.

Concerto for Saxophone Quartet and Wind Ensemble

A world-renowned composer with over 150 works, David Maslanka (1943-2017) studied at the Oberlin Conservatory and received his Master of Music and PhD degrees in Composition from Michigan State University. After teaching at several universities for two decades, in 1990, he moved to Montana to compose full-time. Friends and colleagues described Maslanka as “generous,” “kind,” “gentle,” and “humble”; yet while his music often displays

such characteristics, it is also monumental, stunning, riveting, powerful, and intensely spiritual. All these qualities show up across Maslanka’s scores; the *Concerto for Saxophone Quartet and Wind Ensemble* being no exception.

Whereas the whole work seems to be in search of something, whether that be belonging, enlightenment, or intimacy, the third movement (III. Dramatic/motoric), heard tonight, reveals more playful mysterious qualities, while also presenting a fierceness towards potentially revealing inaccessible answers to the unknowable. Perhaps this is due to the inspiration behind this (and many other) music by this composer; namely, the works of J. S. Bach. As Maslanka explains: “*For a period of ... my musical listening was intently focused on the keyboard concertos of J.S. Bach. The invention of the keyboard concerto is attributed to Bach. His pieces in this genre are small musical gems, finding an exquisite balance of feeling, technique, and form. It is the element of balance that intrigues me the most – letting the music speak what it needs to as economically as possible.*”

My Concerto for Saxophone Quartet and Wind Ensemble reflects some of these values. It is not programmatic – no stories to tell beyond what the music wants to say, and what it sparks in each listener. The three movements are substantial but concise. The solo quartet is often integrated into the accompanying group in the fashion of a Baroque Concerto Grosso.”

Indeed, this movement yields great attention to the dialogue between soloist—whether in the form of a solo saxophonist from the quartet or the quartet as a whole—and the larger wind ensemble. The ways in which the solo sections meander and maneuver showcase, not only virtuosity and brilliance, but also maintain suppleness and fluid forward motion. This inspires the dual core qualities of the ensemble; namely, the freedom found in possessing both strength and fragility.

As Maslanka states: “*Two Chorale melodies appear in the Concerto, We Should Now Praise Christ, and Only Trust in God to Guide You. I have used Chorale melodies in my music for many years.*”

These melodies open something deep in me. The Chorales have transformed my composing, and my composing has absorbed and transformed the Chorales. My use of the Chorales is not about preaching the Christian faith, but feeling the full power of melodies that have grown out of the Earth, and through centuries of human experience. They have been my doorway to the roots of our musical language.”

Come Sunday

After receiving a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from James Madison University, an Master of Music from the New England Conservatory, and studying composition with Ken Schaphorst and Frank Carlberg, as well as the Grammy-winning composer and bandleader Maria Schneider, Brooklyn born composer, arranger, trombonist, and educator Omar Thomas (b. 1984) has been commissioned by diverse ensembles such as the Eastman New Jazz Ensemble, the San Francisco and Boston Gay Mens’ Choruses, and the Colorado Symphony Orchestra. Writing music across classical and jazz styles, Thomas’ musical ethos defies categorization, at times fusing gospel, jazz, Latin, blues, and classical idioms. Because of this, his music evokes a worldly cosmopolitanism, whether he is writing music about LGBTQ+ identity, civil rights, or social unrest.

Written in 2018, “Come Sunday” is a two-movement tribute to a specific instrument that impacted Black worship services, namely the Hammond organ. As explained by Thomas: *“The first movement, Testimony, follows the Hammond organ as it readies the congregation’s hearts, minds, and spirits to receive The Word via a magical union of Bach, blues, jazz, and R&B. The second movement, Shout!, is a virtuosic celebration - the frenzied and joyous climactic moments when The Spirit has taken over the service.*

The title is a direct nod to Duke Ellington, who held an inspired love for classical music and allowed it to influence his own work in a multitude of ways. To all the black musicians in wind ensemble who were given opportunity after opportunity to

celebrate everyone else’s music but our own - I see you and I am you. This one’s for the culture!”

Symphony No. 8

An extensive, near religious evocation, Maslanka’s *Symphony No. 8*, like the Concerto heard earlier, draws from the spiritual world, in this case both the spirituality found in the universe as well as spirituality found across religious teachings. Commissioned by a consortium of 36 conductors formed by Dr. Stephen Steele of Illinois State University, this piece is, in Maslanka’s words, a *“celebration of life. It is about new life, continuity from the past to the future, great hope, great faith, joy, ecstatic vision, and fierce determination.”* While Maslanka composed this Symphony in three distinct movements, the work can be heard as one long *“panoramic vista.”* Somewhat reminiscent of Symphony No. 4 in that regard, *Symphony No. 8* yields a meditation on what it means to exist connected to each and all.

As Maslanka’s program notes explain:

“The old is continually present in the new. The first movement touches the ‘Gloria’ from my Mass: ‘Glory to God in the highest,’ whatever that may mean to you: the power of the universe made manifest to us and through us.

“The second movement is a large fantasia on the old Lutheran chorale melody Jesu meine Freude (Jesus My Joy). The life of Christ is one powerful image of the high creative: being willing to be broken to receive the new; giving oneself up entirely so that a new idea can be born. The old form of the organ chorale prelude underlies this movement – new language out of the old.

“The third movement is a music of praise and gratitude for all that is. It can be traced to the very end of the favorite old hymn tune All Creatures of Our God and King – the part with the joyous descending major scale where all the bells ring out. I recently used this tune for a set of variations in a piece called Unending Stream of Life, a name which could also be a fitting subtitle for this new symphony.”

Program notes by Dr. Marissa Silverman

ABOUT THE SOLOISTS

The Zzyzx Quartet, comprising soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone sax, exemplifies the happy development of the instrument in the excellence of their playing, the quality of their repertoire, and their synthesis as a quartet. Watching them is like watching a well-directed string section whose bows move in unison; the members of Zzyzx breathe simultaneously, their voices swelling together or seamlessly trading over an undulating sea of sound.” – Judy Myers, City Arts Magazine NYC

Formed in 2007, the Zzyzx Quartet has presented performances throughout the United States, Europe and Asia, as well as numerous masterclasses and workshops across the continental United States. The quartet has been a featured performer at the World Saxophone Congress in Strasbourg, France, the North American Saxophone Alliance Biennial Conference, and with the South Dakota State and Montclair University Wind Ensembles. Committed to the advancement of saxophone quartet repertoire, Zzyzx has commissioned and premiered new works by composers including Carlos Simon, John Mackey, David Maslanka, Sarah Gibson, Marc Mellits, Mischa Zupko, David Rakowski, John Leszczynski, Elliott Bark, Laura Kramer, Armando Bayolo, and Jonathan Sokol. As a result of this dedication to new music, Zzyzx was invited to serve as adjudicators for the prestigious Barlow Endowment, and was dedicatee of the new work, *Awake, Alive, Amok, Ajar*, by endowment winner Ben Hjertmann.

Each of its members are award-winning soloists, having received top prizes in prestigious national and international competitions including the Gaudeamus International Competition, Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition, William Byrd International Competition, North American Saxophone Alliance Competition, MTNA Young Artist Competition, Yamaha Young Performing Artist Competition, and the Carmel Music Society Instrumental Competition.

Stacy Wilson (soprano saxophone) – Stacy is Principal Saxophonist with the West Point Concert band and saxophone faculty at Montclair State University

Stephen Page (alto saxophone) – Stephen is the Professor of Saxophone at the University of Texas at Austin Butler School of Music

Matt Evans (tenor saxophone) – Matt Evans is a saxophonist with the United States Army Pershings Own Concert Band in Washington, D.C.

Dana Booher (baritone saxophone) - Dana is a saxophonist with the United States Navy Band in Washington D.C.

The quartet has released two full-length albums, “Zzyzx Road” and “Intersections,” which are available on all major streaming platforms. Its members hold prestigious performing and teaching positions within the West Point Academy Concert Band, United States Navy Band, “Pershing’s Own” Army Concert Band, The University of Texas at Austin Butler School of Music, and Montclair State University.

Zzyzx Quartet is a Yamaha Performing Artist, and a D’Addario Performing Artist.

ABOUT THE CONDUCTORS

Nicholas Mossa currently serves as a band director at Bridgewater Raritan High School and has enjoyed teaching music in the Bridgewater Raritan community since 2012. He is currently pursuing his graduate degree in Wind Band Conducting at Montclair State University, and serves as the associate conductor of the Wind Symphony.

At BRHS, Mr. Mossa is the director of the Marching Band and Symphonic Band, assistant director of

the Wind Ensemble, and co-director of the Concert Band. A devoted advocate for music education, Mr. Mossa also oversees the Winter Guard and Indoor Percussion Ensembles as the director of the Marching Arts Programs, and also directs the Tuesday Jazz Band & Clarinet Choir.

Mr. Mossa also has an extensive performance background as a clarinetist, including professional appearances with the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra, Adelphi Orchestra, and the Central Park Orchestra. Mr. Mossa has also been recognized as a featured soloist with the Montclair State University Symphony Orchestra and at Windhaven in Vermont. Additional performances have included concerts in Providence, Boston, Baltimore, Chicago, Shanghai, and New York City. Mr. Mossa is a member of the Eastern Wind Symphony and enjoys performances throughout the tri-state area each season.

Mr. Mossa's professional affiliations include the New Jersey Association for Jazz Education, Central Jersey Music Educators Association, New Jersey Music Educators Association, and the National Association for Music Education, and is also the championships Co-Chair for the New Jersey Marching Band Directors Association.

Thomas McCauley is currently the Director of University Bands in the John J. Cali School of Music at Montclair State University in New Jersey where he conducts the Montclair State University Wind Symphony, the Symphonic Band, and teaches both graduate and undergraduate conducting. He has held similar positions in the states of Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois, in addition to teaching high school instrumental music in Nevada for nine years. Composers including Karel Husa, David Gillingham, Michael Daugherty, Joseph Turrin, Bruce Yurko, Robert Aldridge, Morten Lauridsen, Armando Bayolo, and O'Neal Douglas have praised his work. Dr. McCauley has appeared as a clinician at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago on three different occasions. Each November, he hosts and co-

teaches a symposium at Montclair State University called the *Weekend Wind Conducting Symposium* with special guest clinicians and participants from around the world.

Dr. Thomas McCauley is in demand as a guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator throughout North America. Ensembles under McCauley's direction have appeared at national and regional conventions and conferences, and he has collaborated with artists including Dame Evelyn Glennie, The Imani Winds, The Manhattan Brass Quintet, Warren Vache', Demondrae Thurman, Monarch Brass, and Phil Smith among others. In February of 2019, Dr. McCauley led the Montclair Wind Symphony in concert at the 2019 *College Band Directors Association* national conference in Tempe, Arizona. And the appearance of the Montclair State Wind Symphony at the WASBE International Conference in Prague, Czech Republic in July of 2022 was the first in the school's history.

Dr. McCauley's book titled, *Adventures in Band Building (or How to Turn a Less-Than-It-Could-Be into a More-Than-It-Should-Be)* is published by G.I.A. Publications. He has been published in *The Instrumentalist* magazine, several state music magazines, and in the second edition of *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band, Vol I* published by G.I.A. publications. In 1995, the Nevada Music Educators Association named Dr. McCauley *Music Educator of the Year* and in 2006, the Indiana Music Educators Association honored Dr. McCauley with an *Outstanding University Music Educator Award*. He currently serves on the Executive Board of the New Jersey Band Association, is the New Jersey State Representative of the College Band Directors National Association, and is the former New Jersey State Representative of the National Band Association. He is also an active member of the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles, and the National Association for Music Education, in addition to serving as a Conn-Selmer Educational Clinician. Dr. McCauley earned undergraduate and graduate

degrees in Music Education from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, and holds a D.M.A. in conducting from Northwestern University.

THE MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY WIND SYMPHONY

Comprised of the best wind players and percussionists in the John J. Cali School of Music at Montclair State University in New Jersey, the Montclair State University Wind Symphony, since 2006, has appeared at the New Jersey Music Educators Association Conference, the CBDNA Eastern Division Conference, the National Association for Music Education Eastern Division Conference, and the Northeast Regional Tuba-Euphonium Conference. Their appearance at the 2019 CBDNA National Conference in Tempe, Arizona marked the first time that a large ensemble from Montclair State University appeared at a national conference. In July of 2022, the Montclair State Wind Symphony appeared at the international conference of the World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (WASBE) in Prague, Czech Republic. Again, a first in the history of the school.

The Montclair State University Wind Symphony rehearses twice per week for a total of 3.5 hours, and is one of three concert bands in the John J. Cali School of Music. Though the graduate student population is always growing, the majority of its members are undergraduate students majoring in Music Education, Music Therapy, Music Performance, or Composition. The Montclair State University Wind Symphony has premiered works by composers Michael Daugherty, Bruce Yurko, David Gillingham, Elizabeth Brown, Armando Bayolo, O'Neal Douglas, Patrick Burns, and Ting Ho, and has participated in commissioning works from composers Lawton Hall, Susan Botti, James Beckel, Stephen Anderson, and Rollo Dilworth among others. The Montclair State Wind Symphony has appeared in concert with, among others, Dame Evelyn Glennie, Arturo Sandoval, Doreen Ketchens, Imani Winds, Monarch Brass,

Manhattan Brass Quintet, and the Zzyzx Quartet. Since 2006, recruiting and concert tours have taken the ensemble to Philadelphia, Boston, Indianapolis, Chicago, Atlantic City, Nevada, Arizona, New York, and the Czech Republic. Former members of the band program are now teaching in public and private schools throughout the northeast, performing as professional musicians throughout the country, and have gone on to attend some of the most prestigious graduate institutions in the world.

THE 2024 MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY WIND SYMPHONY

(in alphabetical order)

FLUTE/PICCOLO

Klaudia Acevedo, Music Education, Elizabeth, NJ
Luiza Ribeiro, Music Performance, João Pessoa, Brazil
Anaya Torrence, Music Performance, Brooklyn, NY

PICCOLO

Jacob Medina, Artist Diploma, Allentown, PA

OBOE

Quinten Hansen, Woodwind Doubling, Palmer, AK
Iva Verba, Music Performance, Brooklyn, NY

ENGLISH HORN

David Reinstein, Music Education, New Milford, NJ

BASSOON

Jonathan Hart, Woodwind Doubling, Miller Place, NY
Taylor Lee, Woodwind Doubling, Anaheim, CA
Jamie Staton, Woodwind Doubling, Raleigh, NC

CONTRABASSOON

Darren Butler, Music Education, Jackson, NY

E♭ CLARINET

Luke Carbon, Woodwind Doubling, Melbourne, AU

B♭ CLARINET

Basil Blasa, Music Education, Bayonne, NJ
Nicolette DiBari, Music Composition, Middletown, NJ
Ben Harris, Woodwind Doubling, Paramus, NJ
Emmett Miller, Music Performance, New York City, NY
Tristan Shafran, Woodwind Doubling, Saddle Brook, NJ
Erin Smith, Woodwind Doubling, League City, TX
Ashley Wallis, Music Education, Hopatcong, NJ

BASS CLARINET

Zarina Campos, Music Education, Morristown, NJ

CONTRABASS CLARINET

Maria Taveras, Music Performance, Bronx, NY

SOPRANO SAXOPHONE

Jaehyuk Lee, Music Performance, Fort Lee, NJ

ALTO SAXOPHONE

Lucas Harvey, Music Education, Mount Olive, NJ

TENOR SAXOPHONE

Lily Kearney, Music Performance, Clifton, NJ

BARITONE SAXOPHONE

Ariana Giammance, Music Education, Wyckoff, NJ

FRENCH HORN

Jeison Campoverde, Music Education, Hackensack, NJ
Josh Jenkins, Conducting, Fair Lawn, NJ
Faith Santana, Music Education, Rutherford, NJ
Sheldon Senek, Music Education, West Orange, NJ

TRUMPET

Gianna Ciaburri, Music Performance, Staten Island, NY
Gabriel Chalick, Jazz Performance, Naples, FL
Clifton Little, Artist Diploma, Dallas, TX
Ashley Martin, Music Education, Jackson, NJ
John Rivas, Music Education, Clifton, NJ
Will Schetelich, Music Education, Scotch Plains, NJ

TROMBONE

Nicholas Andrade, Music Performance, Roxbury, NJ
Aidan Andreoli, Music Performance, Owasso, OK
James Boland, Artist Diploma, Hamilton, NJ
Hairo Cesar, Music Education, Corona Queens, NY

EUPHONIUM

Victoria Ortega, Music Education, Staten Island, NY
James Quinn, Music Education, Staten Island, NY

TUBA

JT Adinolfi, Music Education, Chester, NJ
John Bergner, Music Education, Jackson, NJ

DOUBLE BASS

Dom Carnival, Jazz Performance, Manhattan, NY

PERCUSSION

Rolan Bansil, Music Performance, Ridgewood, NJ
Isabella Cruz, Music Education, Bayonne, NJ
Hannah D'elia, Music Education, Bridgewater, NJ
Zach Doberentz, Music Education, Toms River, NJ
Domingo Hernandez, Music Education, Toms River, NJ
Nikiforos Pothos, Music Education, Bridgewater, NJ

PIANO

Youn-Hee Kim, Faculty