



Western
Music

Don Wright Faculty of Music

FALL COMPOSERS CONCERT

Tuesday, October 20, 2026
7:30 p.m., von Kuster Hall

Part I

A Conversation with Life

David Meng

David Meng, *piano*

For Those Nine Days

Denzel Benitez-Ortega

Denzel Benitez-Ortega, *piano*

New Day

Abigail Briffett

Darren Lee Wo, *flute*, Leona Wen, *oboe*

Variations of an Echo

Michael Grandy

Michael Grandy, *tambourine*

Part II

Enter His Majesty The King (It's My Last Day)

Abigail Cosstick

Abigail Cosstick and Matthew Horack, *trumpets*

Musings on 016

Alex Poru

Alex Poru, *piano*

Spanish Landscapes

Carter McIntyre

1. *El Toro de Las Ventas*
2. *Atardecer Andaluz*
3. *Tablao*

Arsham Moayedi, *tenor saxophone*, Kevin Daniel Tran Perez, *piano*

The Violinist

Jimmy Jin

Menelaos Menelaou, *violin*

Fantasia

Arash (Mehdi) Seyfipoor

Arash (Mehdi) Seyfipoor, *piano*

PROGRAMME NOTES

A Conversation with Life

David Meng

A Conversation with Life is a piano solo written in 2024, originally as the opening to a charity concert I was organizing. It is organized into four distinct sections, meant to recount the progression of a lifetime, and held together by a repeating motif.

The piece features a flowing, repetitive, and somewhat atonal beginning, meant to represent foggy but tender memories of infancy. Then, it transitions to a more charismatic and lighthearted tone, with a punctuated and distinct lower register, encapsulating the curious wonder and carefree exploration of childhood. In the third section, the piece accelerates into a rapid and frenzied state, as the chaos and uncertainty of growing up begins to take center stage. Finally, a burst of repeated notes brings it to its climax, and the piece transitions to a soft, hopeful conclusion; a reminder that even after all the dramatic trials and tribulations one may go through, the sweet, little moments in life may end up being the most meaningful.

For Those Nine Days

Denzel Benitez-Ortega

For Those Nine Days is a nine movement, theme and variations depicting said days in November of 2024. Being inundated with work both optional and obligatory left little time to spare. Living off-campus—so far off-campus—meant the commute on the unreliable London, Ontario transit took two hours out of my day. After several sleepless nights and irrational decisions made, I brought a blanket and stored it in my locker...

If there's one piece of advice I could give any first-year music student, it's to learn how to say 'no.'

On this tour of a young mind, the material evokes moments of restraint, dissociation, discomfort, and overstimulation. Understanding the melody as a character unveils the tribulations of each day progressing towards madness.

New Day

Abigail Briffett

New Day is a piece for flute and oboe duet composed in the fall of 2026. The two instruments function as independent voices that complement each other harmonically. These harmonies come together to convey a feeling that coincides with the beginning of a new chapter in life.

Variations of an Echo

Michael Grandy

Variations of an Echo involves a constant echo, crossing through three different speeds of music surrounding it. The echo is provided by a single tambourine and electronics, those being a feedback delay and tape. The rate of this echo is at a fixed 500ms, while the tape has three separate tempos throughout the piece that changes the feel of the echo from the tambourine. Many different extended techniques for the tambourine are used, which is elevated by the echo, hearing it over and over again.

Enter His Majesty The King (It's My Last Day)

Abigail Cosstick

This is a fanfare-turned-swing piece composed for a trumpet duo. The piece, along with the title, is meant to evoke the image of two court musicians going off the rails in their royal fanfare. The piece opens with a classic fanfare motif and begins to evolve with the introduction of a blues note, and eventually a key change, leading into a section inspired by a 12 bar blues progression. In this section, new motives are explored and the range of the trumpet as well, with the second trumpet reaching into its pedal range. The piece closes with a brief comedic reference to the opening fanfare material. Please enjoy the performance of the satiric fanfare, *Enter His Majesty The King (It's My Last Day)*.

Musings on 016

Alex Poru

As this piece was originally conceived as a theory exercise, I wanted to create a work in which there was a very clear sense of progression. I wished to capture a feeling of gradual escalation represented through increasing sonic complexity as more and more notes play at once. However, as the music fills, if one listens carefully, the straightforward core of the piece can still be heard throughout the entire piece all the way through to the end.

Spanish Landscapes

Carter McIntyre

A 3-movement piece set to different landscapes related to Spain. The 1st movement *El Toro de Las Ventas* (The Bull of Las Ventas) is a Taurino Paso Doble, a form played for bull fighting events. The 2nd movement, *Astardecer Andaluz* (Andalusian Sunset), is a slow movement meant to convey the scenery of twilight in Andalusia. Finally, the final movement, *Tablao* is written in a fandango dance form intended to convey the image of a tablao, a type of dance hall where flamenco music is commonly found.

The Violinist

Jimmy Jin

The Violinist is a six-movement musical suite accompanied by a narrative video. Its first movement is a solo violin work that combines the dramatic virtuosity, flexible rhythms, and expressive contrasts of the Romantic solo violin tradition with contemporary harmonic and textural approaches.

The movement follows a hospitalized violinist who imagines herself performing freely on stage while being repeatedly pulled back into reality by pain and illness. The music alternates between violent virtuosic passages and fragile sustained harmonics, with the shifts becoming increasingly rapid as fantasy and reality begin to merge. In the final scene, the violinist completes her imagined performance while standing at the edge of a rooftop, before ultimately falling.

Fantasia

Arash (Mehdi) Seyfipoor

Fantasia explores the spontaneous emergence and coexistence of musical ideas in the composer's imagination. At its core lies an original musical idea that serves as an underlying framework, to which fragments, gestures, and stylistic traces associated with different musical periods and composers connect and from which they subsequently depart. These fleeting encounters carry echoes of familiar works and personal listening experiences, revealing how diverse musical ideas can interact within and around a composer's own creative vision. *Fantasia* offers a glimpse into the creative process itself: a space where musical memories, associations, and new possibilities intersect.

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