

# Inspire!

Lawrence University

Symphonic Band

Matthew Arau '97, conductor

*Featuring the World Premiere of  
Samay Raga for Wind Ensemble by  
Aakash Mittal*

Saturday, March 2, 2019

8:00 p.m.

Lawrence Memorial Chapel

*Radiance* (2011)

Theresa Martin  
(b. 1979)

*Sheltering Sky* (2012)

John Mackey  
(b. 1973)

*Tears* (1994)

David Maslanka  
(1943-2017)

◆ INTERMISSION ◆

*Remember the Molecules* (2013)

Michael Markowski  
(b. 1986)

*Samay Raga for Wind Ensemble* (2019)

Aakash Mittal  
(b. 1984)

*World Premiere*

*In 2018 all lighting in Memorial Chapel was updated to LED. Spray foam insulation with an R-value of R40 was added to the attic. The savings associated with these projects are estimated to be more than 105,000 kilowatt hours and \$10,000 per year. Project funded in part by the LUCC Environmental Sustainability Fund.*

### ***Radiance*, Theresa Martin**

The initial inspiration behind *Radiance* came to me when reading about music and its healing properties. Ancient philosophers believed that everything is in motion, everything is vibrating or emanating energy, and everything has a frequency. Some ancient musicians and philosophers also believed that music represented a microcosm, or miniature, of the order of the universe. The rhythms of music reflected everything from the movement of galaxies and stars to days and nights, and even the birth and death of our own cells. These concepts formed the basis of the practice of music as a healing force.

Throughout history, the simple principle continually applied in music is the movement away from and back to a tonal center. This idea is present in the beginning and end of my piece; however, rather than thinking of it as a tonal center, I envisioned it as a “principal frequency.” I imagined further that, before birth we are enfolded within a principal frequency, at birth we move away from it, throughout life we are resonated by it, and at death we return to it. This is the basis behind the form of the piece.

Two related concepts inspired the title, which came to me in the early stages of composing, as I was forming the concept of the piece. First is the concept of one’s aura, made up of a web of pulsating vibrational energies completely surrounding one’s self. Second is the idea that all forces of the universe are movements which radiate from their own center in circular waves in all directions.

In the beginning and end of the piece, the sustained chords in the brass over layers of fast swinging rhythms represent the different pulsating vibrational energies of the aura, made up of different wave lengths, rhythms, and frequencies. The two middle sections, consisting of driving, dance-like rhythms and contrasting melodies, represent a vigorous and spirited pace of life, as well as the joy of living.

*-Theresa Martin, Nov. 2012*

### ***Sheltering Sky*, John Mackey**

The work unfolds in a sweeping arch structure, with cascading phrases that elide effortlessly. The introduction presents softly articulated harmonies stacking through a surrounding placidity. From there emerge statements of each of the two folksong-like melodies - the call as a sighing descent in solo oboe, and its answer as a hopeful rising line in trumpet. Though the composer’s trademark virtuosity is absent, his harmonic language remains. Mackey avoids traditional triadic sonorities almost exclusively, instead choosing more indistinct chords with diatonic extensions (particularly seventh and ninth chords) that facilitate the hazy sonic world that the piece inhabits. Near cadences, chromatic dissonances fill the narrow spaces in these harmonies, creating an even greater pull

toward wistful nostalgia. Each new phrase begins over the resolution of the previous one, creating a sense of motion that never completely stops. The melodies themselves unfold and eventually dissipate until at last the serene introductory material returns - the opening chords finally coming to rest.

*Program note by Jake Wallace*

### ***Tears, David Maslanka***

The title *Tears* came from reading the novel *Monnew* by the African writer Ahmadou Kourouma. His story tells of the destruction of a traditional African culture by European colonization. The native peoples were made to endure the ‘monnew,’ the insults, outrages, trials, contempt, and humiliations of colonialism. My reading of the book was the external motivation for composing the piece, but I don’t know anyone in Africa directly. I have come to understand that fascination with something in the external world means that a thing deep inside me has been touched. So the piece is about something in me. Over the years my music has acted as a predictor for me. It gives me advance non-verbal messages about things inside me that I don’t understand yet: movements of my unconscious that are working their way towards the light.

*Tears* finally is about inner-transformation, and about groping toward the voice of praise. St. Francis and St. Ignatius have said that the proper function of the human race is to sing praise. *Tears* is about inner breaking, and coming to terms with the pain that hinders the voice of praise. *Tears* is about the movement toward the heart of love.

“Our tears will not be abundant enough to make a river, nor our cries of pain sharp enough to extinguish fires.” - from *Monnew* by Ahmadou Kourouma

*Notes by David Maslanka, 1994*

### ***Remember the Molecules, Michael Markowski***

*Remember The Molecules* borrows its title and much of its musical imagery from Norman Maclean’s novella, *A River Runs Through It* - a book that continues to move me in new ways each time I read it. If you’re not familiar with the story or the 1992 movie adaptation directed by Robert Redford starring a young Brad Pitt, the scene is this: Montana fly-fishing country, deep in a canyon next to one of the strongest rivers in Montana, the Big Blackfoot River.

The piece is probably my most organic composition for wind band. I say “organic” because the piece is “through-composed,” which generally means that it was written without any traditional form or musical structure. The piece also doesn’t really have a traditional melody. So what ends up taking the spotlight are the smaller musical ideas. These little motifs,

energized with rhythm, combine and entangle themselves, “one rhythm superimposed upon another” to form a larger musical architecture.

Like many great works of art, Maclean’s novella is about more than just fly fishing. As a semi-autobiographical narrative, Maclean’s own family and his personal relationships with them are woven into the book’s subtext. At the heart of the music sprouts a single motivic seed composed of three notes, Ab-Bb-G. When sounded, these pitches imply two significant intervals that appear throughout the piece: a Major second (Ab-Bb) and a Major seventh (Ab-G). These two intervals are both the closest and one of the furthest removed within a diatonic octave. This juxtaposition of neighboring pitches and distant ones suggests a kind of intervallic duality, which is intended to echo an ever-present theme throughout Maclean’s story, that “it is those we live with and love and should know who elude us” (104).

*Notes by Michael Markowski, 2013*

### ***Samay Raga for Wind Ensemble, Aakash Mittal***

In August of 2013, I found myself wading through waist-deep water holding my saxophone above my head to keep it dry. The grey murky deluge swirled around me with small pieces of urban flotsam sailing past. I was traveling through an alleyway near Kolkata’s Hazra Road on the western side of the city. It was the height of monsoon season, a time when torrential rains could fall for hours. From my apartment window I watched the city of Kolkata fill like a basin. Now I was submerged in the water itself, trying to make it in time for a lesson with Prattyush Banerjee, a great sarod player and teacher of Hindustani music in Kolkata. I had studied with Prattyush-da before on short self-funded trips in 2009 and 2010. However on this humid August day I was embarking on a yearlong intensive project with support from the American Institute of Indian Studies Performing Arts Fellowship. A little monsoon rain was not going to keep me from gaining the knowledge and experience I had traveled across the world to learn.

While the bedrock of this piece is my love of raga music and western instrumentation, it is not intended to represent the diverse and evolving art form of Hindustani music nor to represent the culture of South Asian people. This piece is born of my personal journey as a half Indian person in the world. It is a journey wherein music regularly plays the role of guide and companion. In addition to being an exploration of technical musical material, this piece is an expression of specific experiences, people, and imagined realities.

*Samay Raga for Wind Ensemble* draws heavily from my studies and performances of Hindustani raga music in India. It is also an homage to the decade of wind band playing that was omnipresent in my musical upbringing yet has been largely absent from my professional career. In

writing this piece, I want to contribute both to wind ensemble literature and offer a perspective on the possibilities of the raga as a universal musical system. This piece uses both mediums to imagine a futuristic sound world. It is a landscape where the colorful dissonances of raga music form harmonic skylines that are navigated by flowing melodies and punctuated with rhythmic adventures.

In the tradition of Hindustani music, each raga is associated with a specific time of day or season. When performed in sequence, this work takes the listener from the early morning sounds of Bhairagi through the monsoon rains of Megh Malhar. After a brief rest with the evening sounds of Yaman, the piece concludes with a polyrhythmic dance party at midnight with Malkauns. I intentionally do not stray from the structure and rules governing each raga. The result is a piece that does not have any of the chord progressions we have become accustomed to in western music. Rather it is an experience of invented harmonies that immerse the listener in a unique sonic universe. It is my hope that this work will inspire others to mine their own heritage for guidance and creative inspiration.

*With gratitude, Aakash Mittal. December 29, 2018*

### **About the Composer:**

Hailed as “A fiery alto saxophonist and prolific composer” by the Star Tribune (Minneapolis), **Aakash Mittal** is sculpting a dynamic voice that mines the intersection of improvisation, composition, sonified movement, and noise. The colorful dissonances, meditative silences, and angular rhythms that emerge invite the listener to enter a sonic landscape. Mittal’s work seeks to explore universal sound designs while being rooted in both South Asian and American musical traditions. As a composer, Aakash Mittal has written over one hundred new works for a variety of ensembles and mediums. His recent commissions include the found-sound piece *Ghosts* (2017) for BOMB Magazine and a work for solo percussion titled *Meditation, Motion, and Melody* for Indian-American percussionist David Abraham (2017). Aakash Mittal’s awards and honors include the Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music (2012), the Herb Albert/ASCAP Young Jazz Composers Award (2013), and the American Institute of Indian Studies Senior Performing and Creative Arts Fellowship (2013).

# Lawrence University Symphonic Band

Listed alphabetically to reflect the importance of each player

## *Flute*

Marcus Anderson  
Alison Gauvreau\*  
Lorenna Klobuchar  
Rachel Michtom  
Kalysta Schwartz  
Maggie Smith  
Rikke Sponheim  
Helen Threlkeld  
Kylie Zajdel

## *Oboe*

Ben Constable  
Alex Gesme\*  
Anna Kallay

## *Bassoon*

Emilia Jackson (contra)  
Nate Mitchell  
Kol Peduk\*

## *Clarinet*

Abby Arnholt  
Carley Brenner (BC)  
Georgia Chau (Eb)  
Naomi Curran  
Susie Francy (BC)  
Katie Kitzinger\*  
Tessa Larson  
Katie Nottberg  
Drew Paulson  
Sarah Schweickart (BC)  
Claudia Simmons  
Andrew Stelzer

## *Saxophone*

Sara Cooper (alto)  
Donovan Elliott (alto)  
Andrew Gooch (bari)  
Alyssa Kuss (alto)  
Jenn Overton (tenor)  
Alex Rothstein\* (alto/sop)  
Ben Schaffzin (alto)  
Melanie Shefchik  
(tenor)

## *Trumpet*

Tristan Dock  
Nathan Ferguson  
Theresa Gruber-Miller\*  
Henry Killough  
Brianna McCarthy  
Matthew McDonnell  
Liam Traynor

## *Horn*

Andrei Coman\*  
Julia Hackler  
Simone Levy  
Peyton Reicherts  
Jonah Sharp

## *Trombone*

Mikayla Frank-Martin  
Nathan Graff  
Kate James  
Lauren Kelly  
Brian Nelson (bass)  
Molly Ruffing  
Matt Rynkiewicz  
Aaron Zommers\*

## *Euphonium*

Drece Cabrera  
Erin Ijzer\*

## *Tuba*

Micah Briggs  
Jay MacKenzie\*  
Brian Nelson

## *String Bass*

Maggie Bice  
Ian Harvey

## *Percussion*

Spencer Bunch-  
Hotaling\*  
Taylor Hallman  
Elizabeth Hermann  
Dalton McLaughlin  
Aaron Montreal  
Tyler Nanstad  
Karl Painter  
Jaden Rivers  
Amanda Thomas

## *Piano*

Liam Wood

## *Celeste*

Isabella Andries

## *Harp*

Leila Pertl

\*Denotes section leader

## *SETUP CREW*

Matt Fowler  
Nick Muellner  
Jenn Overton

## *LIBRARIAN*

Emilia Jackson  
Emma Reading

## Special Thanks to the Lawrence University Conservatory Instrumental Artist Faculty

Erin Lesser, flute	Marty Erickson, tuba and euphonium
Suzanne Jordheim, flute	Dane Richeson, percussion
Nora Lewis, oboe	Mark Urness, string bass
David Bell, clarinet	Nathan Wysock, guitar
Steve Jordheim, saxophone	Kathrine Handford, organ
Carl Rath, bassoon	Catherine Kautsky, piano
Ann Ellsworth, horn	Michael Mizrahi, piano
John Daniel, trumpet	Anthony Padilla, piano
Jeffrey Stannard, trumpet	
Tim Albright, trombone	

### Upcoming Performances

Performance schedule (Specific repertoire listed on the web page)

Saturday, April 13, 8:00 PM, Symphonic Band/Wind Ensemble

Saturday, May 18, 8:00 PM, Wind Ensemble

Saturday, May 25, 8:00 PM, Symphonic Band

For information on future performances go to:

[https://www.lawrence.edu/conservatory/areas\\_of\\_study/wind\\_ensemble/  
Current\\_season\\_repertoire](https://www.lawrence.edu/conservatory/areas_of_study/wind_ensemble/Current_season_repertoire)

Facebook: "Lawrence University Bands" • Twitter: luwinds



As a courtesy to the artists and to those in attendance, please be aware that sounds such as whispering and the rustling of programs and cellophane wrappers are magnified in the hall. Please turn off all watch alarms, pagers, and cellular telephones. And please, no flash photography.