

Wednesday, April 16, 2025 • 7:30 PM

Thursday, April 17, 2025 • 2:00 PM

Ordway Concert Hall

JESS GILLAM, SAXOPHONE THOMAS WEAVER, PIANO

This concert is dedicated to the memory of Charlotte P. Ordway, by her children

Flow My Tears (1600) John Dowland (1563–1626)

Shine You No More (2017) Rune Sørensen (b. 1983)
arr. Jess Gillam

Oboe Sonata, FP 185, (arr. for soprano saxophone) (1962) Francis Poulenc (1899–1963)
Élégie • Scherzo • Déploration transc. John Harle

Temporal Variations (1936) Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)
Theme • Oration • March • Exercises transc. Jess Gillam
Commination • Chorale • Waltz • Polka • Resolution

Beau Soir (1891) Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

Cantique (1909) Nadia Boulanger (1887–1979)
arr. Alistair Vennart

Sonata in F Minor, BWV 41:f1 (1728–29) Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767)
Triste • Allegro • Andante • Vivace arr. Simon Parkin

Intermission

A Tribute to The Greats

Pequena Czardas Pedro Iturralde (1929–2020)
arr. John Harle/Jess Gillam

Chant Sacré (Sacred Song) Hector Berlioz (1803–1869)
arr. John Harle

The Peacocks (1977) Stan Getz (1927–1991), Jimmy Rowles (1918–1996)
arr. Iain Farrington

Extracts from Sonata for Alto Saxophone (1962) Philip Woods (1931–2015)

The Unseen Way Barbara Thompson MBE (1944–2022)

Petite Fleur Sidney Bechet (1897–1959)

Liza (All the Clouds'll Roll Away) (1929) George Gershwin (1898–1937)
arr. Al Gallodoro / trans. Peter Riley

RANT! (2018) John Harle (b. 1956)

PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Chant Sacré (Sacred Song)

Hector Berlioz (1803–1869)

arr. John Harle

Hector Berlioz wrote the *Chant Sacré (Sacred Song)* in 1829, and went on to create three arrangements for this brief piece: choir and piano, chorus and orchestra, and in 1844 a version for six wind instruments. This last arrangement—since lost—included two types of clarinets and four “saxhorns” invented by the Belgian musician and inventor, Adolphe Sax, including the instrument we know today as the saxophone. Berlioz, the master orchestrator, met Adolphe Sax and greatly admired his new musical instruments. In his “Treatise on Instrumentation” he praised them as “round, pure, full and completely even over the whole range of their scale.” In the next decade Berlioz employed saxophones in his opera *Les Troyens*.

Berlioz’s *Chant Sacré* is the first work written by a major composer for the saxophone. My arrangement of *Chant Sacré* is for soprano saxophone and piano, with a backing track on which I play four alto saxophones and two bass clarinets on very rare, original Adolphe Sax instruments. In the arrangement I let the Berlioz work speak for itself, in the hope that the unique and unusual sounds of the Adolphe Sax instruments speak with a strange authenticity. This work is dedicated to Jess Gillam.

– John Harle

The Unseen Way

Barbara Thompson MBE (1944–2022)

The Unseen Way was adapted from “Journey to a Destination Unknown,” a suite of 12 songs scored for 100 voices, organ, & percussion. It was based on the writings of Rabindranath Tagore, with a contribution from Poet Laureate, Andrew Motion.

I have always been interested in writing for the human voice, which like the saxophone, has an infinite range of expression, but the partnership of words, meaning and tonality is fascinating and getting it right has been a great challenge. When Pam Reekie offered me this commission in 2002, I jumped at the chance of working with Sian Croose and members of the choir “Big Sky” which was specially enlarged to 100 voices for this project. This was a wonderful chance to make the transition finally from performer to composer, which I had always wanted to do. Fate stepped in and made the choice for me, and working with the choir proved to be an uplifting experience.

– Barbara Thompson

***RANT!* (2018)**

John Harle (b. 1956)

RANT! is a portrait of Jess Gillam—her energy, her sound and her presence, painted in music from her own part of England. A ‘rant’ in the tradition of English Folk music is an energetic dance, and means ‘to make merry’—which is exactly what Jess does, both in her fearless live performance and in the exuberance she has brought to the recording studio for this album.

RANT! draws on Cumbrian folk tunes sourced from Ed Heslam’s unique collected folk music resource ‘Music of Cumberland and Westmoreland,’ as well as several tunes composed by Ed himself. These folk tunes include *The Ulverstone Volunteers*, which is trumpet ‘call to arms’ from her own home town, and the piece opens with a quote from *Cumberland Nelly*, and this is the tune that I have fed through *RANT!* to eventually reappear in the final climactic section.

– John Harle



Barry Cockcroft

Melbourne Sonata, I. Go! (2012)

Barry Cockcroft

Barry Cockcroft, the esteemed Australian saxophonist and composer, writes works known for their captivating appeal, distinctive quirkiness, and technical intrigue. From the composer's performance notes:

The effective performance of this piece lies in the ability of the duo to maintain considerable intensity throughout. The two parts are tightly integrated and at times the two instruments should be indistinguishable from one another. With few gaps in the saxophone part, circular breathing is essential. The lines weave in and out of each other leaving neither instrument prominent."

Sidebar: "Circular breathing" is a technique used by players of some wind instruments to produce a continuous tone without interruption. It is accomplished by inhaling through the nose while simultaneously pushing air out through the mouth using air stored in the cheeks. In 1997, a Guinness World Record was set for the longest held musical note when Kenny G used circular breathing to sustain an E-flat on a saxophone for 45 minutes and 47 seconds!



Photograph of
Francis Poulenc
c. 1955

Oboe Sonata, FP 185 (1962)

Francis Poulenc (b. Paris, 1899; d. Paris, 1963)

French composer Francis Poulenc's last completed work from 1962 is dedicated to the memory of Sergei Prokofiev. The movements are ordered in a slow-fast-slow arrangement, as opposed to the traditional fast-slow-fast sequence. Poulenc's instruction for the first movement (Elégie) is "Peacefully, without hurry", the second movement "Very lively", and for the last, "Very calm". A *New York Times* reviewer described the sonata as a "paradoxical mix of the elegiac, the suave and the clever."

Maud Moon Weyerhaeuser Sanborn International Artist Series



Maud Moon Weyerhaeuser Sanborn (1876-1965) was born in Rochester, Minnesota. She married Charles Weyerhaeuser in 1898 and lived most of her life in Saint Paul. A talented singer always active in the musical community, she supported Schubert Club and the Minneapolis Symphony. She had a special affection for Salzburg and Tanglewood where she spent summers. She developed close friendships with important musicians of her day such as Dmitri Mitropoulos and Serge Koussevitsky. The International Artist Series is dedicated to her memory by her grandchildren.



Phil Woods performing in Telluride, Colorado
c. 1978 ©Tom Copi

Temporal Variations (1936)

Benjamin Britten (b. Lowestoft, United Kingdom, 1913; d. Aldeburgh, UK, 1976)

Britten's *Temporal Variations* were completed on December 12, 1936, and first performed three days later at Wigmore Hall, London. Although Britten's diary indicates that he was pleased with the work, inexplicably, no further performances took place during his lifetime. Britten was a master of the variation form, and "Temporal" shows a range of moods and techniques for the instrument. The meaning of the title is not clear, although a clue might be found in the *Commination* variation, which in the Anglican liturgy is defined as a "recital of Divine threatenings against sinners." After the statement of an original theme, the seven variations that follow are effectively wartime vignettes. These cover such diverse images as marching, military exercises, and an Anglican Church service. The mood is not all serious, as a tongue-in-cheek *Waltz* and an irreverent *Polka* lighten the mood.

Flow My Tears (1600)

John Dowland (b. London, 1563; d. London, 1626)

Dowland might be the quintessential English renaissance composer, lutenist and singer, best known for his melancholy ballads. One of his better known works is the lute song "Flow my tears," the first verse of which runs:

*Flow my tears, fall from your springs,
Exil'd for ever let me mourn;
Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings,
There let me live forlorn.*

Sonata in F Minor, TWV 41:f1 (1728–29)

Georg Philipp Telemann

(b. Magdeburg, Germany, 1681; d. Hamburg, 1767)

Telemann's F minor Sonata, originally for Bassoon (or recorder) and keyboard, is often played today on flute, and now the saxophone, illustrating not only the adaptability of this work, but the saxophone's flexibility to perform baroque music.

New Work

John Harle

(b. Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom 1956)

John Harle OBE is an award-winning composer, saxophonist, record producer and educator whose work spans musical genres from classical to contemporary pop. Harle is a composer of operas, around fifty concert works and over 100 film and TV scores. He is currently Professor of Saxophone at the Guildhall School, London and has authored an important reference book, *The Saxophone: The Art and Science of Playing and Performing*. Harle served as artistic advisor to Paul McCartney for six years, and has collaborated with Elvis Costello, Herbie Hancock and Elmer Bernstein.

Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano, Movement I (1961)

Philip Woods

(b. Springfield, MA, 1931; d. East Stroudsburg, PA, 2015)

Phil Woods was an influential American jazz alto saxophonist, clarinetist, bandleader, and composer born in Springfield, Massachusetts. Woods had a long and prolific career in jazz, known for his virtuosic playing and bebop style. He played with many of the jazz greats throughout his career and led his own groups as well. Woods received numerous awards and honors, including multiple Grammy Awards. He left behind a rich legacy of recordings and compositions that continue to influence and inspire musicians today. The *Sonata for Alto Sax and Piano* is a unique work that incorporates jazz into a classical concert piece. The entire middle section of the first movement involves improvisation, requiring the player to have experience in both performance practices.



Barbara Thompson ©David Redfern

***The Peacocks* (1977)**

Stan Getz (b. Philadelphia, PA, 1927; d. Malibu, CA, 1991)

Jimmy Rowles

(b. Spokane, WA, 1918; d. Los Angeles, CA, 1996)

The Peacocks is the title track of an album of the same name by pianist Jimmy Rowles, featuring saxophonist/album producer Stan Getz, recorded in 1975. It is a sweet ballad that featured the trademark sultry, mellifluous solos of Getz.

***Liza (All the Clouds'll Roll Away)* (1928)**

George Gershwin

(b. Brooklyn, NY, 1898; d. Los Angeles, CA, 1937)

Arr. Al Gallodoro

Liza is a song composed by George Gershwin with lyrics by Ira Gershwin and Gus Kahn. It was introduced in 1929 by Ruby Keeler in Florenz Ziegfeld's musical *Show Girl*. This arrangement is by the great American saxophonist Al Gallodoro, who was a member of the Paul Whiteman Orchestra and played bass clarinet for 12 years with the NBC Symphony Orchestra under Arturo Toscanini. Bandleader Jimmy Dorsey praised Gallodoro as "the best sax player who ever lived."

***Valse Marilyn* (1927)**

Rudy Wiedoeft (b. Detroit, MI, 1893; d. Flushing, NY, 1940)

Wiedoeft was the first American virtuoso on saxophone, widely known and recorded during the 1920s. He served in the military during World War I, leading service bands, then led bands in New York during the 1920s. In his heyday, he was called "The Fritz Kreisler of the Saxophone" who also helped

modernize the design of the alto sax. He composed many solos for the sax, including a tribute to someone named "Marilyn." (Marilyn Monroe was only a one-year old when he wrote it, so it's unlikely that it was originally meant for her, but the music goes well with her images!)

A Tribute to Sidney Bechet

The Unseen Way

Barbara Thompson MBE

(b. Oxford, UK, 1944; d. London, 2022)

Barbara Gracey Thompson MBE was a formidably talented English jazz saxophonist, flutist and composer. She began studying clarinet, flute, piano and classical composition at the Royal College of Music, but the music of Duke Ellington and John Coltrane made her shift her interests to jazz and the saxophone. She blazed a trail for female instrumentalists of her generation and her spectrum of skills covered a range, from the sensuous lyricism of Coleman Hawkins or Stan Getz to the power of John Coltrane's turbulent soliloquies.

Thompson worked closely with Andrew Lloyd Webber on musicals such as *Cats* and *Starlight Express*, his *Requiem*, and Lloyd Webber's 1978 classical-fusion album *Variations*.

***RANT!* (2018)**

John Harle

Note from the composer:

Composed in 2018, *RANT!* is a portrait of Jess Gillam—her energy, her sound and her presence, painted in music from her own part of England. A 'rant' in the tradition of English Folk music is an energetic dance, and means 'to make merry' - which is exactly what Jess does, both in her fearless live performance and in the exuberance she has brought to the recording studio for this album. *RANT!* draws on Cumbrian folk tunes including *The Ulverston Volunteers*, which is a trumpeter's 'Call to Arms' from Jess' hometown, and the piece opens with a quote from *Cumberland Nelly*. This is the tune that I have fed through *RANT!* to eventually re-appear in the final climactic section.

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